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A
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O F
SOCIETY AND MANNERS
I N
I T A L Y:

W I T H
ANECDOTES relating to some EMINENT CHARACTERS.

BY JOHN MOORE, M. D.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

V O L. I.



Strenua nos exercet inertia: navibus atque
Quadrigis petimus bene vivere. Quod petis, hic est.
HOR.

L O N D O N :

Printed for W. STRAHAN ; and T. CADELL, in the Strand.

MDCCLXXXI.

ADVERTISEMENT

THE following observations on Italy
and on Italian manners, extracted in
the course of the late Tour which I made
contained in a book lately published, en-
titled A View of Society and Manners in
France, Switzerland, and Germany, were
made. All who have read that book will
perceive, at this time, that the present
work is a continuation of the former; but
to those who have not read it, it is thought
necessary to account for the several manners
in which the following Letters begin.

Given at London, the 14th of December, 1750.

LONDON:
Printed by J. Knapton, in Strand.

ADVERTISEMENT.

THE following observations on Italy, and on Italian manners, occurred in the course of the same Tour in which those contained in a book lately published, entitled *A View of Society and Manners in France, Switzerland, and Germany*, were made. All who have read that book will perceive, at first sight, that the present work is a continuation of the former; but to those who have not, it was thought necessary to account for the abrupt manner in which the following Letters begin.

Clarges-street,
December 14, 1780.

Just Published,

A NEW EDITION OF

A VIEW of SOCIETY and MANNERS
in FRANCE, SWITZERLAND, and
GERMANY; with ANECDOTES rela-
ting to some EMINENT CHARACTERS.
In Two Volumes. Price 10s. in Boards.

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A VIEW



A
V I E W
OF
SOCIETY AND MANNERS
IN
I T A L Y.



LETTER I.

DEAR SIR,

Venice.

AVING left Vienna, we proceeded through the Duchies of Stiria, Carinthia, and Carniola, to Venice.

Notwithstanding the mountainous nature of those countries, the roads are remarkably good. They were formed originally at a vast expence of labour to the inhabitants, but in such a durable manner, that it re-

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quires

quires no great trouble to keep them in repair, to which all necessary attention seems to be paid. Some of the mountains are covered with wood, but more generally they are quite bare. Among them are many fields and vallies, fit for pasturage and the cultivation of grain; a few of these vallies are remarkably fertile, particularly in the Duchy of Carniola. The bowels of the earth abound in lead, copper, and iron. Stirian steel is reckoned excellent; and the little town of Idra, in Carniola, is famous for the quicksilver mines in its neighbourhood.

It has been a matter of controversy among the learned (for the learned dispute about many things which the ignorant think of little importance), by what road the original inhabitants came, who first peopled Italy? And it has been decided by some, that they must have entered by this very country of Carniola. These gentlemen

men lay it down as an axiom, that the first inhabitants of every country in the world, that is not an island, must have come by land, and not by sea, on account of the ignorance of the early inhabitants of the earth in the art of navigation; but Italy being a peninsula, the only way to enter it by land, is at some part of the isthmus by which it is joined to the rest of Europe. The Alps form great part of that isthmus, and, in the early ages, would exclude strangers as effectually as the sea. The easiest, shortest, and only possible way of avoiding seas and mountains, in entering Italy, is by the Duchy of Carniola and Friuli. *Ergo*, they came that way. Q. E. D.

In contradiction to the preceding demonstration, others assert, that the first inhabitants came in ships from Greece; and others have had the boldness to affirm, that Italy had as good a right as any other

country to have inhabitants of its own original production, without being obliged to any vagrants whatever.

I thought it right to give you the opinion of the learned on this country, because it is not in my power to describe it from my own observation; for we passed through those Duchies with a rapidity which baffles all *description*.

The inns are as bad as the roads are good; for which reason we chose to sleep on the latter rather than in the former, and actually travelled five days and nights, without stopping any longer than was necessary to change horses.

This method of travelling, however agreeable and improving it may be in other respects, is by no means calculated to give one the most perfect and lasting idea of the face of a country, or of the manners
and

and characters of the inhabitants; and therefore I hope you will not insist upon an exact account of either.

Among other curiosities which our uninterrupted and expeditious movement prevented us from observing with due attention, was the town of Gratz, the capital of Stiria, through which we unfortunately passed in the middle of the night.

I did not regret this on account of the regularity of the streets, the venerable aspect of the churches, the sublime site of the castle, and other things which we had heard extolled; but solely because we had not an opportunity of visiting the shrine of St. Allan, a native of England, who formerly was a Dominican Monk of a convent in this town, and in high favour with the Virgin Mary, of which she gave him some proofs as strong as they were extraordinary. Amongst other marks of

her regard, she used to comfort him with milk from her breasts. This, to be sure, is a mark of affection seldom bestowed upon favourites above a year old, and will, I dare say, surprise you a good deal. There is no great danger, however, that an example of this kind should spread among virgins. Of the fact in the present instance there can be no doubt; for it is recorded in an inscription underneath a portrait of the Saint, which is carefully preserved in the Dominican convent of this city. We continued our journey, in the full resolution of reaching Venice before we indulged in any other bed than the post-chaise; but were obliged to stop short on a sudden for want of horses, at a small town called Wipach, bordering on the county of Gorizia, in Carniola.

Before setting out from Vienna, we had been informed, that the Archduke and his Princess were about to return to Milan; for

for which reason we thought it adviseable to remain at Vienna eight days after their departure, to avoid the inconveniencies which might arise from a deficiency of post-horses on such an unfrequented road.

Having taken our measures with so much foresight, we little expected, when we actually did set out, to meet with any delay in our progress.

The Archduke and his Duchess, however, had thought proper to go out of the direct road as far as Trieste, to view the late improvements of that town, whose commerce is greatly encouraged and protected by the Emperor; and remaining there a few days, all the post-horses which had been assembled to carry them to Trieste, were kept in the post-houses for their use; consequently we found none at Wipach. It began to grow dark when we arrived; the Post-master was smoking his

pipe at the door. As soon as the chaise stopped, we called to him to get ready the horses without loss of time; for, I added, with a tone of importance, that we could not possibly stay a moment. To this he replied coolly, that since we were in so very great a hurry, he should not attempt to detain us, but that he had no horses to carry us on. I asked, how soon they could be got. He answered, when they returned from attending the Archduke; but whether that would be the next day, the following, or a day or two after, he could not tell.

It appeared a great hardship to be stopped short, so unexpectedly, at a little poultry inn, and we agreed that nothing could have happened more unfortunately. After a few hasty ejaculations, which regarded the posting establishment, and the Lords of Police of this country, we resolved to make a virtue of necessity, and bear our misfortunes with firmness and equanimity.

As

As we stepped out of the chaise, I ordered the Post-master, therefore, to get ready beds, a good supper, and some of his best wine. Instead of receiving these injunctions with marks of satisfaction, as I expected, he answered without emotion, that he had no wine but for his own drinking; that he never gave suppers to any but his own family; and that he had no bed, except that which he himself, his wife, and his child occupied, which could not easily hold any more than them three at a time.

I had not hitherto perceived that this man's house was not an inn: as soon as I was undeceived, I begged he would inform us where the inn was. He pointed with his pipe to a small house on the opposite side of the street.

There we were told, that all the victuals in the house were already devoured—three or four guests were in every spare room—the

the family going to bed—and they could not possibly receive any more company. We had nearly the same account at another little inn, and an absolute refusal at every house where we sued for admittance.

The town of Wipach is so near Goritia, that no travellers, except those of the meanest kind, ever think of stopping at the former; and therefore the inhabitants have no idea of making preparations for other guests.

In this dilemma I returned to our Postmaster, who was still smoking his pipe before the door. I informed him of our bad success, and, in a more soothing tone of voice than that in which I had formerly addressed him, begged to know how we were to dispose of ourselves that night. He replied, with admirable composure, *that* was more than he could tell; but as the horses were expected in a few days, if I

should send him word where we were to be found, he would take care to let us know the moment they should be ready: in the mean time, as it began to rain, and the evening was exceedingly cold, he wished us a very good night. So saying, he went into the house, shutting and bolting the door very carefully after him.

No philosopher, ancient or modern, ever supported the distresses of others with more equanimity than this man.

We were now fully convinced, that to be under the necessity of remaining all night at an inn, when they incline to proceed on their journey, is not the most unfortunate thing that can befall travellers, and would have now been happy in that situation which we had considered with horror an hour or two before.

In this forlorn condition I turned to an Italian servant of the Duke of H——'s,
a shrewd

a shrewd fellow, who seldom wanted a resource in times of difficulty. He seemed, however, a little nonplussed on the present emergency; he stood shrugging his shoulders, with his eyes fixed on the ground. At length, starting as if he had that instant awaked, he muttered, "Cent ore di maniconia non pangano un quattrino di debito," and then walked away with an air not totally devoid of hope.

I attended him, without knowing upon what his expectations were founded. We came to a convent of Monks, and got admittance; the Italian called for the Superior, and told him, in a few words, our condition. The venerable old man heard him with an air of benevolence; he expressed sorrow at the treatment we had received, and, desiring me to accompany him, said he would endeavour to find us lodgings. He conducted us to a poor looking house, occupied by a widow and her children. As soon as the good Monk had mentioned
our

our case, she said we should be most welcome to such entertainment as she could afford. We had an excellent supper of four krout, and fallad. I shall never forget it. I found her wine excellent, and her beds delightful; the good Monk seemed to enjoy the satisfaction we expressed, and positively refused to accept of any other recompence for his trouble.

Had we found the most elegant inn, and the most luxurious supper at our arrival, we might possibly have spent the evening in repining at being disappointed in post-horses; but the dread of so small a misfortune as passing the night supperless in the streets, reconciled us at once to the widow's hovel, and made us happy with her homely fare; so necessary is a certain portion of hardships or difficulties for giving a zest to enjoyment. Without them, the comforts of life are apt to become insipid; and we see that the people who, inde-

independent of any effort of their own, have every enjoyment at their command, are, perhaps, of all mankind, those who have the least enjoyment.

The widow, as we understood in the morning, had sat up all night with her family, that we might be accommodated with beds. She had no reason to repent her hospitality. The poor woman's gratitude made her talk loudly of the D— of H——'s generosity; which coming to the ears of the Post-master, induced him to make an effort to get the chaises dragged on to Goritia, without waiting the return of the post-horses.

This was performed by three cart-horses and two oxen, which were relieved in the most mountainous part of the road by buffalos. There is a breed of these animals in this country; they are strong, hardy, and docile, and found preferable to either horses

horses or oxen, for ploughing in a rough and hilly country.

When we arrived at Goritia, we found the inhabitants in their holiday dresses, at the windows, and in the streets, waiting with impatience for a sight of the Grand Duke and Duchess. Having applied at the post-house for horses, we were informed that none could be granted, all being retained for the accommodation of his Highness. I could not help remarking to the D— of H——, that *Dukes* seemed to be in a very different predicament from *prophets in their own countries*.

Things turned out better than we had reason to expect. Their Highnesses arrived in the evening; and as they did not propose to leave Goritia till next morning, the Archduke had the politeness to give orders that the D— of H—— should have what

what horses he wanted from the post-houses.

We set out immediately, and arrived at the next stage between one and two in the morning. In that part of the world, raising the people at midnight, and harnessing the horses for two carriages, takes up, at least, as much time as driving two stages in some parts of England. Just as we were going out of the post-house court, the Archduke's butler and cook arrived; they were going forward, as usual, to prepare supper, &c. at the inn where their Highnesses intended to lie. They knew that the horses were all retained for their master, but had not heard of the particular order in favour of the D— of H——. Seeing ten horses going to set out, they exclaimed against the Post-master, and threatened him with the vengeance of the whole house of Austria through all its branches,

branches, if he should permit a single horse to leave the post-house till the Archduke and his suite had passed.

The man, terrified with these threats, ordered the postilions to dismount, and put up the horses. This mandate was by no means agreeable to the D— of H———; and the Post-master's fear of the indignation of the Imperial family, was that instant lost in a danger which was presented to his face, and more immediately threatened his person—he ordered the postilions to drive on.

The next post was at a small town in the Venetian State, where we found that orders had come from Venice to the same effect with those received at the different stages we had already past. The D— of H——'s Italian servant thought it would save time to make us pass for part of the company to which these orders related—

he ordered horses in the name of the Grand Duke, and was instantly obeyed—but the butler and cook arriving soon after, told a different tale. Couriers were dispatched, one of whom overtook us, and, in the name of the magistrates, ordered the postilions to drive back, for we were a gang of impostures, who had no connection with the Grand Duke. The same arguments, however, which had so good an effect on the German Post-master, prevailed also on the courier to be silent, and the postilions to proceed.

It was midnight before we arrived at Mestre, a small town on the banks of the Lagune, five miles from Venice, where we remained all night. Next morning we hired a boat, and in two hours were landed in the middle of this city.

We have taken very delightful apartments at an inn, on the side of the great canal.

canal. They had been just quitted by his Royal Highness the Duke of Gloucester, who is at present at Padua. Thus at length we are arrived in Italy—

Per varios casus, & tot discrimina rerum.

LETTER II.

Venice.

A Few days after our arrival at Venice, we met the Archduke and Duchefs, at the house of the Imperial Ambaffador. They were highly entertained with the history of their cook and butler, which I gave them at full length.

The company confifted entirely of foreigners, the Venetian nobility never visiting in the houses of foreign minifters.

Among other ftangers was the fon of the Duke of Berwick. This young gentleman has lately allied himfelf to the family from which he is defcended, by marrying the fifter of the Countefs of Albany. I
fuppofe

suppose you have heard that the Pretender, now at Florence, has assumed the title of Count Albany.

Next day the D— of H—— accompanied the Archduke and Duchefs to the arfenal. They were attended by a deputation from the fenate.

Some Venetian ladies of the firft diftinction, in compliment to the Archduchefs, were of the party.

The arfenal at Venice is a fortification of between two and three miles in compafs. On the ramparts are many little watch-towers, where centinels are ftationed. Like the arfenal at Toulon, it is at once a dock-yard, and repository for naval and military ftores. Here the Venetians build their fhips, caft their cannon, make their cables, fails, anchors, &c. The arms are arranged here as in other places of the fame kind,

in large rooms divided into narrow walks by long walls of muskets, pikes, and halberts. Every thing having been prepared before the Archduke and Duchefs arrived, a cannon was cast in their prefence. After this the company were conducted on board the Bucentaur, or vessel in which the Doge is carried to espouse the Adriatic. Here they were regaled with wine and sweetmeats, the Venetian nobles doing the honours of the entertainment.

The Bucentaur is kept under cover, and never taken out but for the espoufals. It is formed for containing a very numerous company, is finely gilt and ornamented within, and loaded on the outside with emblematical figures in sculpture. This vessel may poffibly be admired by landfmen, but will not much charm a feaman's eye, being a heavy broad-bottomed machine, which draws little water, and confequently may be eafily overfet in a gale of wind.

Of

Of this, however, there is no great danger, as two precautions are taken to prevent such an accident; one of which seems calculated to quiet the minds of believers, and the other to give confidence to the most incredulous. The first is used by the Patriarch, who, as soon as the vessel is afloat, takes care to pour into the sea some holy water, which is believed to have the virtue of preventing or allaying storms. The second is entrusted to the Admiral, who has the discretionary power of postponing the marriage ceremony, when the bride seems in the smallest degree boisterous. One of the virtues of the holy water, that of allaying storms, is by this means rendered superfluous.

But when the weather is quite favourable, the ceremony is performed every Ascension Day. The solemnity is announced in the morning by the ringing of bells and firing of cannon. About mid-day the

Doge, attended by a numerous party of the senate and clergy, goes on board the Bucen-taur; the vessel is rowed a little way into the sea, accompanied by the splendid yachts of the foreign Ambassadors, the gondolas of the Venetian nobility, and an incredible number of barks and gallies of every kind. Hymns are sung, and a band of music performs, while the Bucentaur and her attendants slowly move towards St. Lido, a small island, two miles from Venice. Prayers are then said; after which the Doge drops a ring, of no great value, into the sea, pronouncing these words—Desponsamus te, Mare, in signum veri perpetuique dominii. The sea, like a modest bride, assents by her silence, and the marriage is deemed valid and secure to all intents and purposes.

Certain it is, the time has been, when the Doge had entire possession of, and dominion over, his spouse; but, for a considerable

siderable time past, her favours have been shared by several other lovers; or, according to that violent metaphor of Otway's,

— — — — — now

Their Great Duke shrinks, trembling in his palace,
And sees his wife, the Adriatic, plough'd,
Like a lewd whore, by bolder prows than his.

After viewing every thing in the arsenal, the Archduke and Duchefs, with all the company, were invited on board some boats which had been prepared for their reception. They were directly rowed to that part of the lake from whence there was the most advantageous view of Venice, a band of music performing all the time; while the failors, in two or three small boats, were employed in fishing oysters, which they opened and presented to the company.

The amusements of this day had all the advantage of novelty to render them agreeable

able to strangers, and every additional pleasure which the attentive and polite behaviour of the Venetian nobility could give.

LETTER III.

Venice.

AS this is not the time of any of the public solemnities which draw strangers to Venice, it is fortunate that we happen to be here with the Archduke and Duchess. The great respect which this state is anxious of shewing the Imperial family, has brought many of the nobility to Venice, who would otherwise have been at their country seats on the continent, and has also given us opportunities of seeing some things to more advantage than we could otherwise have done.

I had the honour of attending their Highnesses when they went to visit the island of Murano. This is about a mile
from

from Venice, was formerly a very flourishing place, and still boasts some palaces which bear the marks of former magnificence, though now in a state of decay. The island is said to contain 20,000 inhabitants. The great manufactories of looking-glasses are the only inducements which strangers have to visit this place. I saw one very fine plate, for a mirror, made in the presence of the Archduke in a few minutes: though not so large as some I have seen of the Paris manufactory, yet it was much larger than I could have thought it in the power of human lungs to blow. Instead of being cast, as in France and England, the Murano mirrors are all blown in the manner of bottles. It is astonishing to see with what dexterity the workman wields a long hollow cylinder of melted glass, at the end of an iron tube, which, when he has extended as much as possible, by blowing, and every other means his art suggests, he flits with a sharp instrument, removing

removing the two extremities from each other, and folding back the sides: the cylinder now appears a large sheet of glass, which being once more introduced into the furnace, is brought out a clear, finished plate.

This manufactory formerly served all Europe with looking-glasses; the quantity made here is still considerable; for although France and England, and some other countries, make their own mirrors, yet, by the natural progress of luxury, those countries which still get their mirrors and other things from Murano, use a much greater quantity now than formerly; so that on the supposition that the Murano manufacturers have lost three-fourths of their customers, they may still retain half as much trade as they ever had. It is surprising that, instead of blowing, they do not adopt the method of casting, which I should think a much easier process, and by which

which larger plates may be made. Besides mirrors, an infinite quantity of glass trinkets (*margaritini* as they are called) of all shapes and colours are made here. Women of the inferior ranks wear them as ornaments, and as rosaries; they also mould this substance into many various whimsical forms, by way of ornamental furniture to houses and churches. In short, there are glass baubles enough made here to bribe into slavery half the inhabitants of the coast of Guinea.

Since the departure of the Archduke and Duchess, the D— of H—— has passed his time mostly in the houses of the foreign Ambassadors, the best resource here, next to the theatres, for strangers.

We were lately at a *conversazione* at the Spanish Ambassador's; it might have passed for a pantomime entertainment. The Ambassador, his lady, and daughters, speak no language

language but Spanish ; and unfortunately this was understood by none of the company but the Duke of Berwick's son. Hearing that Mr. Montague resided at Venice, the D— of H——— has had the curiosity to wait on that extraordinary man. He met his Grace at the stair-head, and led us through some apartments, furnished in the Venetian manner, into an inner room in quite a different style. There were no chairs, but he desired us to seat ourselves on a sofa, whilst he placed himself on a cushion on the floor, with his legs crossed in the Turkish fashion. A young black slave sat by him, and a venerable old man, with a long beard, served us with coffee.

After this collation some aromatic gums were brought, and burnt in a little silver vessel. Mr. Montague held his nose over the steam for some minutes, and snuffed up the perfume with peculiar satisfaction ; he
afterwards

afterwards endeavoured to collect the smoke with his hands, spreading and rubbing it carefully along his beard, which hung in hoary ringlets to his girdle. This manner of perfuming the beard seems more cleanly, and rather an improvement upon that used by the Jews in ancient times, as described in the psalms translated by Sternhold and Hopkins.

'Tis like the precious ointment, that
 Was pour'd on Aaron's head,
 Which from the beard down to the skirts
 Of his rich garments spread.

Or, as the Scotch translation has it :

Like precious ointment on the head
 That down the beard did flow ;
 Even Aaron's beard, and to the skirts
 Did of his garments go.

Which of these versions is preferable, I leave to the critics in Hebrew and English poesy to determine. I hope, for the sake
 of

of David's reputation as a poet, that neither have retained all the spirit of the original. We had a great deal of conversation with this venerable looking person, who is, to the last degree, acute, communicative, and entertaining, and in whose discourse and manners are blended the vivacity of a Frenchman with the gravity of a Turk. We found him, however, wonderfully prejudiced in favour of the Turkish characters and manners, which he thinks infinitely preferable to the European, or those of any other nation.

He describes the Turks in general as a people of great sense and integrity, the most hospitable, generous, and the happiest of mankind. He talks of returning, as soon as possible to Egypt, which he paints as a perfect paradise; and thinks that, had it not been otherwise ordered for wise purposes, of which it does not become us to judge, the children of Israel would cer-

tainly have chosen to remain where they were, and have endeavoured to drive the Egyptians to the land of Canaan.

Though Mr. Montague hardly ever stirs abroad, he returned the D—'s visit; and as we were not provided with cushions, he sat, while he staid, upon a sofa, with his legs under him, as he had done at his own house. This posture, by long habit, is now become the most agreeable to him, and he insists on its being by far the most natural and convenient; but, indeed, he seems to cherish the same opinion with regard to all the customs which prevail among the Turks. I could not help mentioning one, which I suspected would be thought both unnatural and inconvenient by at least one half of the human race; that of the men being allowed to engross as many women as they can maintain, and confining them to the most insipid of all lives, within their harems. “No doubt,”
replied

replied he, “ the women are all enemies to
“ polygamy and concubinage ; and there
“ is reason to imagine, that this aversion
“ of theirs, joined to the great influence
“ they have in all Christian countries, has
“ prevented Mahometanism from making
“ any progress in Europe. The Turkish
“ men, on the other hand,” continued he,
“ have an aversion to Christianity, equal to
“ that which the Christian women have to
“ the religion of Mahomet : auricular
“ confession is perfectly horrible to their
“ imagination. No Turk, of any delicacy,
“ would ever allow his wife, particularly
“ if he had but one, to hold private con-
“ ference with a man, on any pretext
“ whatever.”

I took notice, that this aversion to auricular confession, could not be a reason for the Turk’s dislike to the *Protestant* religion.
“ That is true,” said he, “ but you have
“ other tenets in common with the Catho-

“ lies, which renders your religion as
“ odious as their’s. You forbid polygamy
“ and concubinage, which, in the eyes of
“ the Turks, who obey the dictates of the
“ religion they embrace, is considered as
“ an intolerable hardship. Besides, the
“ idea which your religion gives of heaven,
“ is by no means to their taste. If they
“ believed your account, they would think
“ it the most tiresome and comfortless
“ place in the universe, and not one Turk
“ among a thousand would go to the
“ Christian heaven if he had it in his
“ choice. Lastly, the Christian religion
“ considers women, as creatures upon a
“ level with men, and equally entitled to
“ every enjoyment, both here and here-
“ after. When the Turks are told this,”
added he, “ they are not surpris’d at being
“ informed also, that women, in general,
“ are better Christians than men; but they
“ are perfectly astonish’d that an opinion,
“ which they think so contrary to common
“ sense,

“ sense, should subsist among the rational,
“ that is to say, the male part of Christians.
“ It is impossible,” added Mr. Montague,
“ to drive it out of the head of a Mussul-
“ man, that women are creatures of a
“ subordinate species, created merely to
“ comfort and amuse men during their
“ journey through this vain world, but by
“ no means worthy of accompanying be-
“ lievers to paradise, where females, of a
“ nature far superior to women, wait with
“ impatience to receive all pious Mussul-
“ men into their arms.”

It is needless to relate to you any more of our conversation. A lady, to whom I was giving an account of it the day on which it happened, could with difficulty allow me to proceed thus far in my narrative ; but, interrupting me with impatience, she said, she was surprised I could repeat all the nonsensical, detestable, impious maxims of those odious Mahometans ; and

the thought Mr. Montague should be sent back to Egypt, with his long beard, and not be allowed to propagate opinions, the bare mention of which, however reasonable they might appear to Turks, ought not to be tolerated in any Christian land.

LETTER IV.

Venice.

THE view of Venice, at some little distance from the town, is mentioned by many travellers in terms of the highest admiration. I had been so often forewarned of the amazement with which I should be struck at first sight of this city, that when I actually did see it, I felt little or no amazement at all. You will behold, said those anticipators, a magnificent town, —or more frequently, to make the deeper impression, they gave it in detail—You will behold, said they, magnificent palaces, churches, towers and steeples, all standing in the middle of the sea. Well ; this, unquestionably, is an uncommon scene; and there is no manner of doubt that a town,

surrounded by water, is a very fine sight; but all the travellers that have existed since the days of Cain, will not convince me, that a town, surrounded by land, is not a much finer. Can there be any comparison, in point of beauty, between the dull monotony of a watery surface, and the delightful variety of gardens, meadows, hills, and woods?

If the situation of Venice renders it less agreeable than another city, to behold at a distance, it must render it, in a much stronger degree, less agreeable to inhabit. For you will please to recollect, that, instead of walking or riding in the fields, and enjoying the fragrance of herbs, and the melody of birds; when you wish to take the air here, you must submit to be paddled about, from morning to night, in a narrow boat, along dirty canals; or, if you don't like this, you have one resource more, which is, that of walking in St. Mark's Place.

These

These are the disadvantages which Venice labours under, with regard to situation; but it has other peculiarities, which, in the opinion of many, overbalance them, and render it, on the whole, an agreeable town.

Venice is said to be built in the sea; that is, it is built in the midst of shallows, which stretch some miles from the shore, at the bottom of the Adriatic Gulph. Though those shallows, being now all covered with water, have the appearance of one great lake, yet they are called Lagune, or lakes, because formerly, as it is imagined, there were several. On sailing on the Laguna, and looking to the bottom, many large hollows are to be seen, which, at some former period, have, very possibly, been distinct lakes, though now, being all covered with a common surface of water, they form one large lake, of unequal depth. The intervals between those hollows, it is supposed,

posed, were little islands, and are now shallows, which, at ebb, are all within reach of a pole.

When you approach the city, you come along a liquid road, marked by rows of stakes on each side, which direct vessels, of a certain burthen, to avoid the shallows, and keep in deeper water. These shallows are a better defence to the city than the strongest fortifications. On the approach of an enemy's fleet, the Venetians have only to pull up their stakes, and the enemy can advance no farther. They are equally beyond the insult of a land army, even in the midst of winter; for the flux and reflux of the sea, and the mildness of the climate, prevent such a strength of ice as could admit the approach of an army that way.

The lake in which Venice stands, is a kind of small inner gulph, separated from
the

the large one by some islands, at a few miles distance. These islands, in a great measure, break the force of the Adriatic storms, before they reach the Laguna; yet, in very high winds, the navigation of the lake is dangerous to gondolas, and sometimes the gondoleers do not trust themselves, even on the canals within the city. This is not so great an inconveniency to the inhabitants as you may imagine; because most of the houses have one door opening upon a canal, and another communicating with the street; by means of which, and of the bridges, you can go to almost any part of the town by land, as well as by water.

The number of inhabitants are computed at about 150,000; the streets, in general, are narrow; so are the canals, except the grand canal; which is very broad, and has a serpentine course through the middle of the city. They tell you, there are several
hundred

hundred bridges in Venice. What pass under this name, however, are single arches thrown over the canals; most of them paltry enough.

The Rialto consists also of a single arch, but a very noble one, and of marble. It is built across the grand canal, near the middle, where it is narrowest. This celebrated arch is ninety feet wide on the level of the canal, and twenty-four feet high. Its beauty is impaired by two rows of booths, or shops, which are erected upon it, and divide its upper surface into three narrow streets. The view from the Rialto is equally lively and magnificent; the objects under your eye are the grand canal, covered with boats and gondolas, and flanked on each side with magnificent palaces, churches, and spires; but this fine prospect is almost the only one in Venice; for, except the Grand Canal, and the Canal Regio, all the others are narrow and mean;
some

some of them have no keys; the water literally washes the walls of the houses. When you sail along those wretched canals, you have no one agreeable object to cheer the sight; and the smell is overwhelmed with the stench which, at certain seasons, exhales from the water.

LETTER V.

Venice.

AS the only agreeable view in Venice is from the grand canal, so the only place where you can walk with ease and safety, is in the piazza di St. Marco. This is a kind of irregular quadrangle, formed by a number of buildings, all singular in their kind, and very different from each other.

The Ducal palace—the church of St. Mark—that of St. Geminiano—a noble range of buildings, called Procuratie, the new and the old, in which are the Museum, the public library, and nine large apartments belonging to the Procurators of St. Mark; all these buildings are of marble.

There is an opening from St. Mark's Place to the sea, on which stand two lofty pillars of granite. Criminals condemned to suffer death publicly, are executed between these pillars; on the top of one of them is a lion, with wings; and on the other, a saint—without wings;—there is, however, a large crocodile at his feet, which, I presume, belongs to him. At one corner of St. Mark's church, contiguous to the palace, are two statues of Adam and Eve; they have neither wings nor crocodile, nor any kind of attendant, not even their old acquaintance, the serpent.

At the corner of the new Procuratie, a little distant from the church, stands the steeple of St. Mark. This is a quadrangular tower, about three hundred feet in height. I am told it is not uncommon in Italy for the church and steeple to be in this state of disunion; this shocked a clergyman, of my acquaintance, very much; he

he mentioned it to me, many years ago, amongst the errors and absurdities of the church of Rome. The gentleman was clearly of opinion, that church and steeple ought to be inseparable as man and wife, and that every church ought to consider its steeple as mortar of its mortar, and stone of its stone. An old captain of a ship, who was present, declared himself of the same way of thinking, and swore that a church, divorced from its steeple, appeared to him as ridiculous as a ship without a mast.

A few paces from the church are three tall poles, on which ensigns and flags are hung on days of public rejoicing. These standards are in memory of the three kingdoms, Cyprus, Candia, and Negropont, which once belonged to this republic; the three crowns are still kept in the Ducal palace. Since the kingdoms are gone, I should think the crowns and the poles

hardly worth preserving; they are, however, of the same value to Venice, that the title of King of France is to his Britannic Majesty. At the bottom of the Tower of St. Mark, is a small neat building of marble, called the Loggia, where some of the Procurators of St. Mark constantly attend to do business. Some people are of opinion that, particularly when the grand council, or the senate, are assembled, these Procurators are placed there, as state sentinels, to give warning in case of any appearance of discontent or commotion among the populace, which must necessarily shew itself at this place, as there is no other in Venice where a mob could assemble.

The patriarchal church of St. Mark, though one of the richest and most expensive in the world, does not strike the eye very much at first; the architecture is of a mixed kind, mostly Gothic, yet many

of the pillars are of the Grecian orders; the outside is incrusted with marble; the inside, cieling, and floor, are all of the finest marble; the numerous pillars which support the roof are of the same substance; the whole is crowned by five domes;—but all this labour and expence have been directed by a very moderate share of taste.

The front, which looks to the palace, has five brass gates, with historical bas-relieves; over the principal gate are placed the four famous bronze horses, said to be the workmanship of Lycippus; they were given to the emperor Nero, by Tiridates, king of Armenia; the fiery spirit of their countenances, and their animated attitudes, are perfectly agreeable to their original destination, of being harnessed to the chariot of the Sun.—Nero placed them on the triumphal arch consecrated to him, and they are to be seen on the reverse of some of his medals; they were removed from
Rome

Rome to Constantinople, placed in the Hyppodrome by Constantine, and remained there till the taking of Constantinople by the French and Venetians in the beginning of the 13th century, when they were carried to Venice, and placed upon the gate of St. Mark's church.

The treasury of St. Mark is very rich in jewels and relics; and it was necessary to apply to one of the Procurators of St. Mark for leave to see it. I shall only mention a few of the most valuable effects kept here. Eight pillars from Solomon's temple at Jerusalem; a piece of the Virgin Mary's veil, some of her hair, and a small portion of her milk; the knife used by our Saviour, at his last supper; one of the nails of the cross, and a few drops of his blood. After these it would be impertinent to enumerate the bones, and other relics, of saints and martyrs, of which there is a plentiful show in this church, and still less

need I take up your time with an inventory of the temporal jewels kept here ; it would be unpardonable, however, to omit mentioning the picture of the Virgin, by St. Luke. From this, compared with his other works, it is plain, that St. Luke was a much better evangelist than painter : some professions seem to be almost incompatible with each other. I have known many very good painters who would have made bad saints, and here is an instance of an excellent saint who was but an indifferent painter.

The old Procuratie is built of a kind of black marble ; the new is of the pietra dura of Istria.

The church of St. Geminiano is an elegant piece of architecture, by Sansovino.

The Ducal palace is an immense building, entirely of marble. Besides the apartments

ments of the Doge, there are also halls and chambers for the senate, and all the different councils and tribunals. The principal entrance is by a spacious stair, called the Giants stair, on account of two Colossal statues of Mars and Neptune, placed at the top ; they are of white marble, the work of Sanfovino, and intended to represent the naval and military power of this state. Their gigantic size might be proper enough formerly, but they would be juster emblems of the present force of this republic if their stature were more moderate.

Under the porticoes, to which you ascend by this stair, you may perceive the gaping mouths of lions, to receive anonymous letters, informations of treasonable practices, and accusations of magistrates for abuses in office.

From the palace there is a covered bridge of communication to a state prison, on the

other side of the canal. Prisoners pass to and from the courts over this bridge, which is named Ponte Dei Sospiri.

The apartments and halls of the Ducal palace are ornamented by the pencils of Titian, Paul Veronese, Tintoret, Palma, the Bassans, and other painters. The rape of Europa, and the storming of Zara, both by Paul Veronese are amongst the highest esteemed pieces of that master. The foot of Europa is honoured with the particular admiration of the connoisseurs; the bull seems to be of their way of thinking, for he licks it as he bears her along above the waves. Some people admire even this thought of the painter; I cannot say I am of the number: I think it is the only thing in the picture which is not admirable; it is making Jupiter enter a little too much into the character which he had assumed. There are a few pictures in this palace by Titian, but a great many by the other masters.

masters. The subjects are mostly taken from the history of Venice.

Within the palace there is a little arsenal, which communicates with the hall of the great council. Here a great number of muskets are kept, ready charged, with which the nobles may arm themselves on any sudden insurrection, or other emergency.

The lower gallery, or the piazza under the palace, is called the Broglio. In this the noble Venetians walk and converse: it is only here, and at council, where they have opportunities of meeting together; for they seldom visit openly, or in a family way, at each other's houses, and secret meetings would give umbrage to the state inquisitors; they chuse, therefore, to transact their business on this public walk. People of inferior rank seldom remain on the Broglio for any length of time when the nobility are there.

LETTER VI.

Venice.

I Was led, in my last, into a very particular (and I wish you may not have also found it a very tedious) description of St. Mark's Place. There is no help for what is past, but, for your comfort, you have nothing of the same kind to fear while we remain here; for there is not another square, or *place*, as the French with more propriety call them, in all Venice. To compensate, however, for their being but one, there is a greater variety of objects to be seen at this one, than in any half dozen of the squares, or places, of London or Paris.

After our eyes had been dazzled with looking at pictures, and our legs cramped
with

with sitting in a gondola, it is no small relief, and amusement, to saunter in the Place of St. Mark,

The number and diversity of objects which *there* present themselves to the eye, naturally create a very rapid succession of ideas. The sight of the churches awakens religious sentiments, and, by an easy transition, the mind is led to contemplate the influence of superstition. In the midst of this reverie, Nero's four horses appear, and carry the fancy to Rome and Constantinople. While you are forcing your way, sword in hand, with the heroic Henry Dandolo, into the capital of Asia, Adam and Eve stop your progress, and lead you to the garden of Eden. You have not long enjoyed a state of innocence and happiness in that delightful paradise, till Eve

— her rash hand in evil hour
Forth reaching to the fruit, she plucks, she eats.

After

After that unfortunate repast, no more comfort being to be found there, you are glad to mount St. Mark's winged lion, and fly back to the Ducal palace, where you will naturally reflect on the rise and progress of the Venetian state, and the various springs of their government. While you admire the strength of a constitution which has stood firm for so many ages, you are appalled at the sight of the lion's mouth gaping for accusations; and turning with horror from a place where innocence seems exposed to the attacks of hidden malice, you are regaled with a prospect of the sea, which opens your return to a country of *real* freedom, where justice rejects the libel of the hidden accuser, and dares to try, condemn, and execute *openly*, the highest, as well as the lowest, delinquent.

I assure you I have, more than once, made all this tour, standing in the middle of St. Mark's square; whereas,

in

in the French places, you have nothing before your eyes but monuments of the monarch's vanity, and the people's adulation; and in the greater part of the London squares, and streets, what idea can present itself to the imagination, beyond that of the snug neatness and conveniency of substantial brick houses?

I have been speaking hitherto of a morning faunter; for in the evening there generally is, on St. Mark's Place, such a mixed multitude of Jews, Turks, and Christians; lawyers, knaves, and pick-pockets; mountebanks, old women, and physicians; women of quality, with masks; strumpets barefaced; and, in short, such a jumble of senators, citizens, gondoleers, and people of every character and condition, that your ideas are broken, bruised, and dislocated in the crowd, in such a manner, that you can think, or reflect, on nothing; yet

yet this being a state of mind which many people are fond of, the place never fails to be well attended, and, in fine weather, numbers pass a great part of the night there. When the piazza is illuminated, and the shops, in the adjacent streets, lighted up, the whole has a brilliant effect; and as it is the custom for the ladies, as well as the gentlemen, to frequent the caffinos and coffee-houses around, the Place of St. Mark answers all the purposes of either Vauxhall or Ranelagh.

It is not in St. Mark's Place that you are to look for the finest monuments of the art of Titian, or the genius of Palladio; for those you must visit the churches and palaces: but if you are inclined to make that tour, you must find another Cicerone, for I shall certainly not undertake the office. I do not pretend to be a competent judge of painting or architecture; I have no new remarks

remarks to make on those subjects, and I wish to avoid a hackneyed repetition of what has been said by others.

Some people seem affected by paintings to a degree which I never could feel, and can scarcely conceive. I admire the works of Guido and Raphael, but there are amateurs who fall downright in love with every man, woman, or angel, produced by those painters.

When the subject is pathetic, I am often struck with the genius and execution of the artist, and touched with the scene represented, but without feeling those violent emotions of grief which some others display. I have seen a man so affected with the grief of Venus, for the death of Adonis, that he has wiped his eyes as if he had been shedding tears; and have heard another express as much horror at the martyrdom of a saint, as he could have
 7. done

done had he been present at the real execution. Horace's observation is perfectly just, as he applies it,

Segnius irritant animos demissa per aurem,
Quàm quæ sunt oculis subjecta fidelibus—

He is treating of dramatic pieces ;

Aut agitur res in scenis, aut acta refertur,

is the preceding line. On the stage, what is actually represented, makes a stronger impression than what is only related ; and in real life, no doubt, we should be more shocked by seeing a murder committed, than by hearing an account of it. But whether seeing a pathetic story expressed in painting, or hearing it related, has the most powerful effect, is a different question. I only say for myself, that, on contemplating a painted tragedy, I can never help recollecting that it is acted upon canvas. This never fails to dart such a ray of comfort into my heart, as cheers it up, in spite of all the blood and carnage I see
before

before my eyes. With a mind so vulgarly fabricated, you will not be surpris'd when I acknowledge, that I have felt more compassion at the sight of a single highway-man going to Tyburn, than at the massacre of two thousand innocents, though executed by Nicholas Pouffin himself. This convinces me that I am not endued with the organs of a connoisseur.

But if you are violently bent upon being thought a man of very refined taste, there are books in abundance to be had, which will put you in possession of all the terms of technical applause, or censure, and furnish you with suitable expressions for the whole climax of sensibility. As for myself, I was long ago taught a lesson, which made a deep impression on my mind, and will effectually prevent me from every affectation of that kind. Very early in life, I resided above a year at Paris, and happened one day to accompany five or six of our countrymen,

countrymen, to view the pictures in the Palais Royal. A gentleman who affected an enthusiastic passion for the fine arts, particularly that of painting, and who had the greatest desire to be thought a connoisseur, was of the party. He had read the lives of the painters, and had the *Voyage Pittoresque de Paris* by heart. From the moment we entered the rooms he began to display all the refinements of his taste; he instructed us what to admire, and drew us away with every sign of disgust when we stopped a moment at an uncelebrated picture. We were afraid of appearing pleased with any thing we saw, till he informed us whether or not it was worth looking at. He shook his head at some, tossed up his nose at others; commended a few, and pronounced sentence on every piece, as he passed along, with the most imposing tone of sagacity.—“Bad, “ that Caravaggio is too bad indeed, devoid “ of all grace;—but here is a Caracci that “ makes

“ makes amends ; how charming the grief
“ of that Magdalen ! The Virgin, you’ll
“ observe, gentlemen, is only fainting, but
“ the Christ is quite dead. Look at the
“ arm, did you ever see any thing so dead ?
“ —Aye, here’s a Madona, which they
“ tell you is an original, by Guido ; but
“ any body may see that it is only a tole-
“ rable copy.—Pray, gentlemen, observe
“ this St. Sebastian, how delightfully he
“ expires : Don’t you all feel the arrow
“ in your hearts ? I’m sure I feel it in
“ mine. Do let us move on ; I should die
“ with agony if I looked any longer.”

We at length came to the St. John, by Raphael, and here this man of taste stopped short in an extasy of admiration.—One of the company had already passed it, without minding it, and was looking at another picture ; on which the connoisseur bawled out—“ Good God, Sir ! what are
“ you about ? ” The honest gentleman started,

and stared around to know what crime he had been guilty of.

“Have you eyes in your head, Sir?” continued the connoisseur: “Don’t you know St. John when you see him?”

“St. John!” replied the other, in amazement. “Aye, Sir, St. John the Baptist, “*in propria persona.*”

“I don’t know what you mean, Sir,” said the gentleman, peevishly.

“Don’t you?” rejoined the connoisseur; “then I’ll endeavour to explain myself. I mean St. John in the wilderness, by the divine Raffaele Sanzio da Urbino, and there he stands by your side.—Pray, my dear Sir, will you be so obliging as to bestow a little of your attention on that foot? Does it not start from the wall? Is it not perfectly out of the frame? Did
“ you

“ you ever see such colouring ? They talk
 “ of Titian ; can Titian’s colouring excel
 “ that ? What truth, what nature in the
 “ head ! To the eloquence of the antique,
 “ here is joined the simplicity of nature.”

We stood listening in silent admiration, and began to imagine we perceived all the perfections he enumerated ; when a person in the Duke of Orleans’ service came and informed us, that the original, which he presumed was the picture we wished to see, was in another room ; the Duke having allowed a painter to copy it. *That* which we had been looking at was a very wretched daubing, done from the original by some obscure painter, and had been thrown, with other rubbish, into a corner ; where the Swifs had accidentally discovered it, and had hung it up merely by way of covering the vacant space on the wall, till the other should be replaced.

How the connoisseur looked on this trying occasion, I cannot say. It would have been barbarous to have turned an eye upon him.—I stepped into the next room, fully determined to be cautious in deciding on the merit of painting; perceiving that it was not safe, in this science, to speak even from the book.

LETTER VII.

Venice.

WE acquire an early partiality for Rome, by reading the classics, and the history of the ancient republic. Other parts of Italy also interest us more on account of their having been the residence of the old Romans, than from the regard we pay to what has been transacted there during the last fourteen or fifteen centuries.

Venice claims no importance from ancient history, and boasts no connection with the Roman republic; it sprung from the ruins of that empire; and whatever its annals offer worthy of the attention of mankind, is independent of the prejudice we feel in favour of the Roman name.

The independence of Venice was not built on usurpation, nor cemented with blood; it was founded on the first law of human nature, and the undoubted rights of man.

About the middle of the fifth century, when Europe formed one continued scene of violence and bloodshed; a hatred of tyranny, a love of liberty, and a dread of the cruelty of Barbarians, prompted the Veneti, a people inhabiting a small district of Italy, a few of the inhabitants of Padua, and some peasants who lived on the fertile banks of the Po, to seek an asylum from the fury of Atilla, amongst the little islands and marshes at the bottom of the Adriatic Gulph.

Before this time some fishermen had built small houses, or huts, on one of these islands, called Rialto. The city of Padua, with a view to draw commercial advantages from this establishment, encouraged some
of

of her inhabitants to settle there, and sent every year three or four citizens to act as magistrates. When Attila had taken and destroyed Aquileia, great numbers from all the neighbouring countries fled to Rialto; whose size being augmented by new houses, took the name of Venice, from the district from which the greater number of the earliest refugees had fled. On the death of Attila, many returned to their former habitations; but those who preferred freedom and security to all other advantages, remained at Venice. Such was the beginning of this celebrated republic. Some nice distinguishers pretend, that this was the beginning of their freedom, but not of their independency; for they assert, that the Venetians were dependent on Padua, as their mother city. It is certain that the Paduans claimed such a prerogative over this infant state, and attempted to subject her to some commercial restrictions; these

were rejected by the Venetians, as arbitrary and vexatious. Disputes arose very dangerous to both; but they ended in Venice entirely throwing off the jurisdiction of Padua. It is curious, and not unworthy of serious attention in the present age, to see the parent now totally subjected to the child, whom she wished to retain in too rigorous a dependence.

The irruption of the Lombards into Italy, while it spread havoc and destruction over the adjacent country, was the cause of a great accession of strength to Venice, by the numbers of new refugees who fled to it with all the wealth they could carry, and became subjects of this state.

The Lombards themselves, while they established their kingdom in the northern parts of Italy, and subdued all the ancient district of the Veneti, thought proper to leave

leave this little state unmolested, imagining that an attempt against it would be attended with more trouble than profit; and while they carried on more important conquests, they found it convenient to be on a good footing with Venice, whose numerous squadrons of small vessels could render the most essential services to their armies. Accordingly leagues and treaties were formed occasionally between the two states; the Lombards in all probability imagining, that it would be in their power, at any time, to make themselves masters of this inconsiderable republic. But when that people had fully established their new kingdom, and were free from the expence of other wars, they then found Venice so much increased in strength, that, however much they might have wished to comprehend it within their dominions, it appeared no longer consistent with sound policy to make the attempt. They therefore chose rather to confirm their ancient alliance by fresh treaties.

When

When Charlemagne overturned the kingdom of the Lombards, and, after having sent their king Didier prisoner to France, was crowned emperor at Rome, by Leo the Third, the Venetian state cultivated the favour of that conqueror with so much address, that, instead of attempting any thing against their independence, he confirmed the treaty they had made with the Lombards; by which, among other things, the limits, or boundaries, between the two states, were ascertained.

In the wars with the eastern empire, and in those of later date between France and the house of Austria, Venice always endeavoured to avoid the resentment of either of the contending parties; secretly, however, assisting that which was at the greatest distance from her own dominions, and, of consequence, the least formidable to her. Those great powers, on their parts, were so eager to humble, or destroy, each other,

that the rising vigour of Venice was permitted to grow, for ages, almost unobserved. Like the fame of Marcellus, it might have been said of that republic,

Crescit occulto velut arbor ævo.

And when, at length, she began to excite the jealousy of the great states of Europe, she had acquired strength and revenues sufficient to resist not only one, but great combinations of those powers leagued for her destruction.

This republic, in its various periods of increase, of meridian splendor, and of declension, has already existed for a longer time than any other of which history makes mention. The Venetians themselves assert, that this duration is owing to the excellent materials of which their government has been composed, by which they imagine it has long since been brought to the highest degree of perfection.

As

As I have bestowed some time since we came hither in considering the Venetian history and government, I shall, in my next, take a general view of those boasted materials, that we may be able to judge whether or not this high eulogium is well founded.

LETTER VIII.

Venice.

THE first form of government established at Venice, was purely democratical. Magistrates were chosen by a general assembly of the people: they were called tribunes; and as this small community inhabited several little islands, a tribune was appointed to judge causes, and distribute justice on each of those islands. His power was continued one year; at the expiration of which, he was accountable for his conduct to the general assembly of the people, who annually elected a new set of tribunes.

This simple form of government, while it marks a strict regard to that freedom so
delightful

delightful to the mind of man, was found sufficient, for the space of a hundred and fifty years, to maintain order in a small community, situated as this was. At length the bad administration of some of the tribunes, discord and animosity among others, and some suspicions that the Lombards promoted civil dissention, with a view to bring the republic under their dominion, awakened the fears of the people, and made them listen to the opinions of those who thought a change in the form of government necessary.

After various debates and proposals, it was finally determined, that a chief magistrate should be elected, as the centre of public authority, whose power might give such vigour and efficacy to the laws, as was absolutely necessary in times of danger, and whose duty should be, to direct the force of the resources of the state with promptitude; uncramped by that opposition,

sition, and consequent dilatoriness, which had been too apparent under the tribunes. This magistrate was not to be named King, but Duke, which has since been corrupted to Doge; the office was not to be hereditary, but elective; and the Doge was to enjoy it for life. It was agreed that he should have the nomination of all the inferior magistrates, and the power of making peace, and declaring war, without consulting any but such of the citizens as he should think proper.

When the election took place, all the suffrages fell upon Paul Luc Anafeste, who entered into this new office in the year 697.

The Venetians must certainly have felt great inconveniences from their former government, or have been under great dread from domestic or foreign enemies,
before

before they could submit to such a fundamental change in the nature of their constitution. It is evident, that, on this occasion, they seem to have lost that jealous attention to liberty which they formerly possessed; for while they withheld from their chief magistrate the name, they left him all the power, of a King. There is no period when real and enlightened patriots ought to watch with more vigilance over the rights of the people, than in times of danger from foreign enemies; for the public in general are then so much engrossed by the dangers from without, that they overlook the encroachments which are more apt, at those times than any other, to be made on their constitution from within: and it is of small importance that men defend their country from foreign foes, unless they retain such a share of internal freedom, as renders a country worth the defending.

It is highly probable, that the great degree of popularity which their first Doge had acquired before he arrived at that dignity, and the great confidence the people had in his public and private virtues, rendered them unwilling to limit the power of a person who, they were convinced, would make a good use of it. If the man had been immortal, and incorruptible, they would have been in the right: however, it must be confessed, that this Doge justified their good opinion more than favourites of the people generally do.

In the councils which he called on any matter of importance, he sent messages to those citizens, for whose judgment he had the greatest esteem, *praying*, that they would come, and assist him with their advice. This method was observed afterwards by succeeding Doges, and the citizens so sent for were called Pregadi. The Doge's council are still called Pregadi,

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though they have long sat independent of his invitation.

The first, and second Doge, governed with moderation and ability; but the third gave the Venetians reason to repent that they had not confined the powers of their chief magistrate within narrower limits. After having served the state by his military talents, he endeavoured to enslave it; his projects were discovered; but as the improvident people, in the last arrangement of their constitution, had preserved no legal remedy for such an evil, they were obliged to use the only means now in their power. They assaulted the Doge in his palace, and put him to death without farther ceremony.

The people had conceived so much hatred for him, that, after his death, they resolved to abolish the office. In the general assembly it was agreed, that the chief magistrate, for

for the future, should be elected every year; that he should have the same power as formerly, while he remained in office; but, as this was to be for a short time, they imagined he would behave with equity and moderation; and as they had an equal dislike to Doge and Tribune, he was called Master of the Militia.

The form of government, introduced by this revolution, was but of short duration. Factions arose, and became too violent for the transient authority of the Masters of the Militia to restrain. The office expired five years after its institution; and, by one of those strange and unaccountable changes of sentiment, to which the multitude are so subject, the authority of the Doge was restored in the person of the son of their last Doge, whom, in a fit of furious discontent, they had assassinated. This restoration happened about the year 730.

For a long time after this, the Venetian annals display many dreadful scenes of cruelty, revolt, and affassination; Doges abusing their power, endeavouring to establish a permanent and hereditary despotism, by having their eldest sons associated in the office with themselves, and then oppressing the people with double violence. The people, on the other hand, after bearing, with the most abject patience, the capricious cruelty of their tyrants, rising at once, and murdering them, or driving them, with ignominy, out of their dominions. Unable to bear either limited or absolute government, the impatient and capricious multitude wish for things which have always been found incompatible: the secrecy, promptitude, and efficacy, of a despotic government, with all the freedom and mildness of a legal and limited constitution.

It is remarkable, that when the Doge was, even in a small degree, popular, he
feldom

feldom found any difficulty in getting his son elected his associate in the sovereign authority; and when that was not the case, there are many instances of the son being chosen directly on the death of his father.

Yet, about the middle of the tenth century, the son of the Doge, Peter Candiano, took arms, and rebelled against his father. Being soon after defeated, and brought in chains to Venice, he was condemned to banishment, and declared incapable of being ever elected Doge. It appears, however, that this worthless person was a great favourite of the people; for no sooner was his father dead, than he was chosen to succeed him, and conducted, in great pomp, from Ravenna, the place of his exile, to Venice.

The Venetians were severely punished for this instance of levity. Their new Doge

shewed himself as tyrannical in the character of a sovereign, as he had been undutiful in that of a son. He became a monster of pride and cruelty. The people began to murmur, and he became susceptible of that terror which usually accompanies tyrants. He established a body of life-guards, to defend his person, and lodged them within the palace. This innovation filled the people with indignation, and awakened all their fury. They attack the palace, are repulsed by the guards, and set fire to the contiguous houses. The wretched Doge, in danger of being consumed by the flames, appears at the gate of the palace, with his infant son in his arms, imploring the compassion of the multitude: they, inexorable as demons, tear in pieces both father and child. At such an instance of savage fury, the human affections revolt from the oppressed people, and take part with their oppressor. We

almost

almost wish he had lived, that he might have swept from the earth a set of wretches more barbarous than himself.

Having spent their fury in the destruction of the tyrant, they leave the tyranny as before. No measures are taken to limit the power of the Doge.

For some time after this, a spirit of superstition seemed to lay hold of those who filled that office, as if they had intended to expiate the pride of the late tyrant by their own humility. His three immediate successors, after each of them had reigned a few years with applause, abandoned their dignity, shut themselves up in convents, and passed the latter years of their lives as Monks.

Whatever contempt those pious Doges displayed for worldly things, their example made little impression on their subjects,

who, about this time, began to monopolize the trade and riches of Europe. And some years after, when all Christendom was seized with the religious phrenzy of recovering the Holy Land, the Venetians kept so perfectly free from the general infection, that they did not scruple to supply the Saracens with arms and ammunition, in spite of the edicts of their Doges, and the remonstrances of the Pope, and other pious princes,

Those commercial casuists declared, that religion is one thing, and trade another; that, as children of the church, they were willing to believe all that their mother required; but, as merchants, they must carry their goods to the best market.

In my next, I shall proceed with my review of the Venetian government.

LETTER IX.

Venice.

THE minds of the Venetians were not so totally engrossed by commercial ideas, as to make them neglect other means of aggrandizing their state. All Istria submitted itself to their government: many of the free towns of Dalmatia, harassed by the Narentines, a nation of robbers and pirates on that coast, did the same. Those towns which refused, were reduced to obedience, by Peter Urseolo, the Doge of Venice, who had been sent with a fleet against them, in the year 1000. He carried his arms also into the country of the Narentines, and destroyed many of their towns.

On his return it was determined, in a general assembly of the people, that the
conquered

conquered towns and provinces should be governed by magistrates sent from Venice. Those magistrates called *Podestas*, were appointed by the Doge. The inhabitants of those new-acquired towns were not admitted to the privileges of citizens of Venice, nor allowed to vote at the general assembly: the same rule was observed with regard to the inhabitants of all the dominions afterwards acquired by the republic. It will readily occur, that this accession of dominions to the state greatly augmented the influence and power of the chief magistrate: this, and the practice of associating the son of the Doge with his father, raised jealousies among the people, and a law was made, abolishing such associations for the future.

In the year 1173, after the assassination of the Doge Michieli, a far more important alteration took place in the government. At this time there was no other tribunal at
 Venice

Venice than that of forty judges. This court had been established many years before: it took cognizance of all causes, civil as well as criminal, and was called the council of forty. This body of men, in the midst of the disorder and confusion which followed the murder of the Doge, formed a plan of new-modelling the government.

Hitherto the people had retained great privileges. They had votes in the assemblies; and, although the descendants of the ancient tribunes, and of the Doges, formed a kind of nobility, yet they had no legal privileges, or exclusive jurisdiction; nothing to distinguish them from their fellow-citizens, but what their riches, or the spontaneous respect paid to the antiquity of their families, gave them. Any citizen, as well as them, might be elected to a public office. To acquire the honours of the state, it was absolutely necessary for the greatest and proudest Venetian, to cultivate the good-will of the multitude,

multitude, whose voice alone could raise him to the rank of Doge, and whose rage had thrown so many from that envied situation. The inconveniences, the discord, and confusion, of such a mixed multitude, had been long felt, but nobody had hitherto had the boldness to strike at this established right of the people.

The city was divided into six parts, called Sestiers. The council of forty procured it to be established, in the first place, that each of those sestiers should annually name two electors; that those twelve electors should have the right of choosing, from the whole body of the people, four hundred and seventy counsellors, who should be called the Grand Council, and who should have the same power, in all respects, which the general assembly of the people formerly enjoyed.

It was pretended, that this regulation was contrived merely to prevent confusion, and

to establish regularity in the great national assembly; that the people's right of election remained as before, and, by changing the counsellors yearly, those who were not elected one year might retain hopes of being chosen the next. The people did not perceive that this law would be fatal to their importance: it proved, however, the foundation of the aristocracy, which was soon after established, and still subsists.

The forty judges next proposed another regulation, still more delicate and important. That, to prevent the tumults and disorders which were expected at the impending election of a Doge, they should (for that time only) name eleven commissioners, from those of the highest reputation for judgment and integrity in the state; that the choice of a Doge should be left to those commissioners, nine suffrages being indispensably requisite to make the election valid.

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This evidently pointed at the exclusion of the people from any concern whatever in the creation of the chief magistrate, and certainly was the object in view ; yet, as it was proposed only as a temporary expedient, to prevent disorders, when men's minds were irritated against each other, and factions ran high, the regulation was agreed to.

Having, with equal dexterity and success, fixed those restraints on the power of the people, the council of forty turned their attention, in the next place, towards limiting the authority of the Doge. This was considered as too exorbitant, even for good men ; and, in the hands of wicked men, had always been perverted to the purposes of tyranny, and for which no remedy had hitherto been found, but what was almost as bad as the evils themselves ; revolt on the part of the people, and all the horrors and excesses with which such an expedient

is

is usually accompanied. The tribunal of forty therefore proposed, that the grand council should annually appoint six persons, one from each division of the city, who should form the privy council of the Doge, and, without their approbation, none of his orders should be valid; so that, instead of appointing his own privy-council, which had been the custom hitherto, the authority of the chief magistrate would, for the future, in a great measure, depend on six men, who, themselves, depended on the grand council. To be constantly surrounded by such a set of counsellors, instead of creatures of his own, however reasonable it may seem in the eyes of the impartial, would have been considered by one in possession of the dignity of Doge, as a most intolerable innovation, and probably would have been opposed by all his influence; but there was no Doge existing when the proposal was made, and consequently it passed into a law with universal approbation.

Lastly,

Lastly, it was proposed to form a senate, consisting of sixty members, which were to be elected, annually, out of the grand council. This assembly was in the room of that which the Doge formerly had the power of convoking, on extraordinary occasions, by sending messages, praying certain citizens to come, and assist him with their advice. The members of the new senate, more fixed and more independent than those of the old, are still called the Pregadi. This also was agreed to without opposition; and immediately after the funeral of the late Doge, all those regulations took place.

They began by choosing the grand council of four hundred and seventy, then the senate of sixty, then the six counsellors, and lastly, the eleven electors. These last were publicly sworn, that in the election now entrusted to them, rejecting every motive of private interest, they should give
their

their voices for that person, whose elevation to the dignity of Doge they believed, in their consciences, would prove most for the advantage of the State.

After this, they retired to a chamber of the palace, and Orio Malipier, one of the eleven, had the votes of his ten colleagues; but he, with a modesty which seems to have been unaffected, declined the office, and used all his influence with the electors to make choice of Sebastian Ziani, a man distinguished in the republic on account of his talents, his wealth, and his virtues; assuring them that, in the present emergency, *he* was a more proper person than himself for the office. Such was their opinion of Malipier's judgment, that his colleagues adopted his opinion, and Ziani was unanimously elected.

As this mode of election was quite new, and as there was reason to imagine that

the bulk of the people, on reflection, would not greatly approve of it, and that the new Doge would not be received with the usual acclamations, Ziani took care that great quantities of money should be thrown among the multitude, when he was first presented to them. No Doge was ever received with louder acclamations.

During the reign of Ziani, the singular ceremony of espousing the sea was first instituted.

Pope Alexander the Third, to avoid the resentment of the emperor Frederic Barbarossa, had taken refuge at Venice, and was protected by that State. The emperor sent a powerful fleet against it, under the command of his son Otho. Ziani met him with the fleet of Venice. A very obstinate engagement ensued, in which the Venetians were victorious. The Doge returned in triumph, with thirty of the enemy's vessels,

vessels, in one of which was their commander Otho. All the inhabitants of Venice rushed to the sea-shore, to meet their victorious Doge: the Pope himself came, attended by the senate and clergy. After embracing Ziani, his Holiness presented him with a ring, saying, with a loud voice, “ Take this ring ; use it as a chain
“ to retain the sea, henceforth, in sub-
“ jection to the Venetian empire ; espouse
“ the sea with this ring, and let the mar-
“ riage be solemnized annually, by you
“ and your successors, to the end of time,
“ that the latest posterity may know that
“ Venice has acquired the empire of the
“ waves, and that the sea is subjected to
“ you, as a wife is to her husband.”

As this speech came from the head of the church, people were not surprised to find it a little mysterious ; and the multitude, without considering whether it contained much reason or common sense, re-

ceived it with the greatest applause. The marriage has been regularly celebrated every year since that time.

After the death of Ziani, if the terms which had been agreed upon previous to the election, had been literally adhered to, the grand council of four hundred and seventy would have proceeded to choose a Doge, simply by the plurality of votes; but, for some reason which is not now known, that method was waved, and the following adopted. Four persons were chosen by the grand council, each of whom had the power of naming ten; and the whole forty had the appointing of the Doge.

Their choice fell upon the same Orio Malipier, who had declined the dignity in favour of his friend Ziani.

Under the administration of Malipier, two new forms of magistracy were created; the

the first was that of the Avogadors. Their duty is to take care that the laws in being shall be punctually executed ; and while it is the business of other magistrates to proceed against the transgressors of the laws, it is theirs to bring a process against those magistrates who neglect to put them in execution. They decide also on the nature of accusations, and determine before which of the courts every cause shall be brought, not leaving it in the power of either of the parties to carry a cause to a high court, which is competent to be tried by one less expensive ; and no resolution of the grand council, or senate, is valid, unless, at least, one of the three Avogadors be present during the deliberation. It is also the duty of the Avogadors to keep the originals of all the decisions and regulations of the grand council and senate, and to order them, and all other laws, to be read over, whenever they think proper, by way of refreshing the memories of the senators. If

the senators are obliged to attend during those lectures, this is a very formidable power indeed. I am acquainted with senators in another country, who would sooner give their judges the power of putting them to death at once, in a less lingering manner.

The second class of magistrates, created at this time, was that called Judges al Forestieri; there are also three of them. It is their duty to decide, in all causes between citizens and strangers, and in all disputes which strangers have with each other. This institution was peculiarly expedient, at a time when the resort from all countries to Venice was very great, both on account of commerce, and of the Crusades.

In the year 1192, after a very able administration, Malipier, who was of a very philosophical turn of mind, abdicated the office of Doge, and Henry Dandolo was elected in his place.

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I am a great deal too much fatigued with the preceding narrative, to accompany one of his active and enterprising genius at present; and I have good reason to suspect, that you also have been, for some time past, inclined to repose.

LETTER X.

Venice.

HENRY Dandolo had, in his early years, passed, with general approbation, through many of the subordinate offices of government; and had, a few years before he was elected to the dignity of Doge, been Ambassador at the court of Manuel, the Greek emperor at Constantinople. There, on account of his inflexible integrity, and his refusing to enter into the views of Manuel, which he thought contrary to the interest of his country, his eyes were almost entirely put out, by order of that tyrant. Notwithstanding this impediment, and his great age, being above eighty, he was now elected to the office of Doge.

At

At this time, some of the most powerful princes and nobles of France and Flanders, instigated by the zeal of Innocent the Third, and still more by their own pious fervour, resolved, in a fourth crusade, to attempt the recovery of the Holy Land, and the sepulchre of Christ, from the hands of Infidels; and being, by the fate of others, taught the difficulties and dangers of transporting armies by land, they resolved to take their passage from Europe to Asia by sea. On this occasion they applied to the Venetian State, who not only agreed to furnish ships for the transportation of the army, but also to join, with an armed fleet, as principals in the expedition.

The French army arrived soon after in the Venetian State; but so ill had they calculated, that, when every thing was ready for the embarkation, part of the sum which they had agreed to pay for the transporting their troops, was deficient. This occasioned disputes

disputes between the French leaders and the State, which the Doge put an end to, by proposing, that they should pay in military services what they could not furnish in money. This was accepted, and the first exploits of the Crusade army were, the reduction of the town of Zara, and other places in Dalmatia, which had revolted from the Venetians. It had been previously agreed, that, after this service, the army should embark immediately for Egypt; but Dandolo, who had another project more at heart, represented that the season was too far advanced, and found means to persuade the French army to winter in Dalmatia,

During this interval, Dandolo, availing himself of some favourable circumstances, had the dexterity to determine the French Crusaders, in spite of the interdiction of the Pope, to join with the Venetian forces, and to carry their arms against the emperor of Constantinople; an expedition which,

which, Dandolo asserted, would facilitate their original plan against the Holy Land, and which, he was convinced, would be attended with far greater advantages to both parties.

The crown of Constantinople was never surrounded with greater dangers, nor has it ever known more sudden revolutions, than at this period.

Manuel, who had treated Dandolo, while ambassador, with so much barbarity, had been precipitated from the throne. His immediate successor had, a short time after, experienced the same fate. Betrayed by his own brother, his eyes had been put out, and, in that deplorable condition, he was kept close prisoner by the usurper. The son of this unfortunate man had escaped from Constantinople, and had arrived at Venice, to implore the protection of that State: the compassion which his misfortune naturally excited,

excited, had considerable effect in promoting the Doge's favourite scheme of leading the French and Venetian forces against Constantinople. The indefatigable Dandolo went, in person, at the head of his countrymen. The united army beat the troops of the usurper in repeated battles, obliged him to fly from Constantinople, placed his brother on the throne, and restored to him his son Alexis, who had been obliged to take refuge at Venice, from the cruelty of his uncle, and had accompanied Dandolo in this successful enterprise.

A misunderstanding soon after ensued between the united armies and Alexis, now associated with his father on the throne of Constantinople. The Greeks murmured at the favour which their emperor shewed to those foreigners, and thought his liberality to them inconsistent with his duty to his own subjects. The Crusaders, on the other hand, imagined, that all the wealth
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of his empire was hardly sufficient to repay the obligations he owed to them. The young prince, desirous to be just to the one, and grateful to the other, lost the confidence of both; and, while he strove to conciliate the minds of two sets of men, whose views and interests were opposite, he was betrayed by Murtsuphlo, a Greek, who had gained his confidence, and whom he had raised to the highest dignities of the empire. This traitor insinuated to the Greeks, that Alexis had agreed to deliver up Constantinople to be pillaged, that he might satisfy the avarice and rapacity of those strangers who had restored his family to the throne. The people fly to arms, the palace is invested, Alexis and his father are put to death, and Murtsuphlo is declared emperor.

These transactions, though ascertained by the authenticity of history, seem as rapid as the revolutions of a theatrical representation.

The

The chiefs of the united army, struck with horror and indignation, assemble in council. Dandolo, always decisive in the moment of danger, gives it as his opinion, that they should immediately declare war against the usurper, and make themselves masters of the empire. This opinion prevails, and the conquest of the Greek empire is resolved upon.

After several bloody battles, and various assaults, the united armies of France and Venice enter victorious into Constantinople, and divide the spoils of that wealthy city.

The Doge, never so much blinded with success as to lose sight of the true interest of his country, did not think of procuring for the republic, large dominions on the continent. The Venetians had, for their share, the islands of the Archipelago, several ports on the coast of the Hellespont, the Morea, and the entire island of Candia.

This

This was a judicious partition for Venice, the augmentation of whose strength depended on commerce, navigation, and the empire of the sea.

Though the star of Dandolo rose in obscurity, and shone with no extraordinary lustre at its meridian height, yet nothing ever surpassed the brilliancy of its setting rays.

This extraordinary man died at Constantinople, oppressed with age, but while the laurels, which adorned his hoary head, were in youthful verdure.

The annals of mankind present nothing more worthy of our admiration. A man, above the age of eighty, and almost entirely deprived of his sight, despising the repose necessary for age, and the secure honours which attended him at home; engaging in a hazardous enterprise, against a distant
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and

and powerful enemy; supporting the fatigues of a military life with the spirit of youth, and the perseverance of a veteran, in a superstitious age; and, whilst he led an army of religious enthusiasts, braving, at once, the indignation of the Pope, the prejudices of bigots, and all the dangers of war; displaying the ardour of a conqueror, the judgment of a statesman, and the disinterested spirit of a patriot; preparing distant events, improving accidental circumstances, managing the most impetuous characters; and, with admirable address, making all subservient to the vast plan he had conceived, for the aggrandizing his native country. Yet this man passed his youth, manhood, and great part of his old age, unknown. Had he died at seventy, his name would have been swept, with the common rubbish of courts and capitals, into the gulph of oblivion. So necessary are occasions, and situations, for bringing into light the concealed vigour of the greatest characters;

characters; and so true it is, that while we see, at the head of kingdoms, men of the most vulgar abilities, the periods of whose existence serve only as dates to history, many whose talents and virtues would have swelled her brightest pages have died unnoticed, from the obscurity of their situations, or the languor and stupidity of the ages in which they lived.

But the romantic story of Henry Dandolo has seduced me from my original purpose, which was, to give you an idea of the rise and progress of the Venetian aristocracy, and which I shall resume in my next.

LETTER XI.

Venice.

THE senate of Venice, ever jealous of their civil liberty, while they rejoiced at the vast acquisitions lately made by their fleet and army, perceived that those new conquests might tend to the ruin of the constitution, by augmenting the power and influence of the first magistrate.

In the year 1206, immediately after they were informed of the death of Dandolo, they created six new magistrates, called Correctors; and this institution has been renewed at every interregnum which has happened since.

The duty of those Correctors is, to examine into all abuses which may have taken place

place during the reign of the preceding Doge, and report them to the senate, that they may be remedied, and prevented for the future, by wholesome laws, before the election of another Doge. At the same time it was ordained, that the State should be indemnified out of the fortune of the deceased magistrate, from any detriment it had sustained by his maladministration, of which the senate were to be the judges. This law was certainly well calculated to make the Doge very circumspect in his conduct, and has been the origin of all the future restraints which have been laid on that very unenviable office.

Men accustomed to the calm and secure enjoyments of private life, are apt to imagine, that no mortal would be fond of any office on such conditions; but the senate of Venice, from more extensive views of human nature, knew that there always was a sufficient number of men, eager to grasp the

sceptre of ambition, in defiance of all the thorns with which it could be furrounded.

It was not the intention of the Venetian senate to throw the smallest stain on the character of their late patriotic Doge; nevertheless they thought the interregnum after his death, the most favourable opportunity of passing this law; because, when the Inquisition had taken place after his glorious reign, no Doge could expect that it would ever afterwards be dispensed with.

The Correctors having been chosen, and the inquisition made, Peter Ziani was elected Doge. In his reign a court for civil causes, denominated the Tribunal of Forty, was created. Its name sufficiently explains the intention of establishing this court, to which there is an appeal from the decisions of all inferior magistrates in civil causes tried within the city. It is to be

be distinguished from the court of Forty, formerly mentioned, whose jurisdiction was now confined to criminal causes: it afterwards got the name of *old* civil council of Forty, to distinguish it from a third court, consisting also of forty members, which was established at a subsequent period, to decide, by appeal, in all civil causes, from the judgments of the inferior courts without the city of Venice.

Towards the end of his life, about the year 1228, Ziani abdicated his office. At the election of his successor, the suffrages were equally divided, between Rainier Dandolo, and James Theipolo. This prolonged the interregnum for two months; as often as they were balloted, during that time, each of them had twenty balls. The senate, at last, ordained them to draw lots, which decided in favour of Theipolo.

During his administration, the Venetian code was, in some degree, reformed and

abridged. One of the greatest inconveniences of freedom, is the number of laws necessary to protect the life and property of each citizen; the natural consequences of which are, a multitude of lawyers, with all the suits and vexations which they create; “les peines, les dépenses, les longueurs, les dangers mêmes de la justice,” says Montesquieu, “font le prix que chaque citoyen donne pour sa liberté.” The more freedom remains in a State, of the higher importance will the life and property of each citizen be considered. A despotic government counts the life of a citizen as of no importance at all.

The Doge Theipolo, who had himself been a lawyer, as many of the Venetian nobles at that time were, bestowed infinite labour in arranging and illuminating the vast chaos of laws and regulations in which the jurisprudence of a republic, so jealous of her liberty, had been involved. After a long reign, he abdicated the government; and,

and, to prevent the inconveniency which had happened at his election, the number of electors, by a new decree of the senate, was augmented to forty-one.

In the reign of his successor, Marino Marfini, two judges, called Criminal Judges of the Night, were appointed. Their function is to judge of what are called nocturnal crimes, under which denomination are reckoned robberies, wilful fire, rapes, and bigamy. We find also, that Jews lying with Christian women, is enumerated among nocturnal crimes; though, by an unjustifiable partiality, a Christian man lying with a Jewish woman, whether by night or day, is not mentioned as any crime at all.

A few years after, in the reign of the Doge Rainier Zeno, four more judges were added to this tribunal; and, during the interregnum which took place at his death,

in the year 1268, a new form of electing the Doge was fixed, which, though somewhat complicated, has been observed ever since.

All the members of the grand council, who are past thirty years of age, being assembled in the hall of the palace, as many balls are put into an urn as there are members present; thirty of these balls are gilt, and the rest white. Each counsellor draws one; and those who get the gilt balls, go into another room, where there is an urn, containing thirty balls, nine of which are gilt. The thirty members draw again; and those who, by a second piece of good fortune, get the gilt balls, are the *first electors*, and have a right to choose forty, among whom they comprehend themselves.

Those forty, by balloting in the same manner as in the former instances, are reduced to twelve *second electors*, who choose
twenty-

twenty-five, the first of the twelve naming three, and the remaining eleven two, a-piece. All those being assembled in a chamber apart, each of them draws a ball from an urn, containing twenty-five balls, among which are nine gilt. This reduces them to nine *third electors*, each of whom chooses five, making in all forty-five; who, as in the preceding instances, are reduced by ballot, to eleven *fourth electors*, and they have the nomination of forty-one, who are the *direct electors* of the Doge. Being shut up by themselves, they begin by choosing three chiefs, and two secretaries; each elector, being then called, throws a little billet into an urn, which stands on a table before the chiefs. On this billet is inscribed the person's name whom the elector wishes to be Doge.

The secretaries then, in the presence of the chiefs, and of the whole assembly, open the billets. Among all the forty-one

there are, generally, but a very few different names, as the election, for the most part, balances between two or three candidates. Their names, whatever is the number, are put into another urn, and drawn out one after another. As soon as a name is extracted, the Secretary reads it, and, if the person to whom it belongs is present, he immediately retires. One of the chiefs then demands, with a loud voice, whether any crime can be laid to this person's charge, or any objection made to his being raised to the sovereign dignity? If any objection is made, the accused is called in, and heard in his own defence; after which the electors proceed to give their decision, by throwing a ball into one of two boxes, one of which is for the Ayes, the other for the Noes. The Secretaries then count the balls, and if there are twenty-five in the first, the election is finished; if not, another name is read, and the same inquisition made as

before, till there are twenty-five approving balls.

This form, wherein judgment and chance are so perfectly blended, precludes every attempt to corrupt the electors, and all cabals for the Ducal dignity ; for who could dream, by any labour or contrivance, of gaining an election, the mode of whose procedure equally baffles the address of a politician and a juggler ?

Lawrence Theipolo was the first Doge chosen according to this mode. In his reign the office of Grand Chancellor was created.

Hitherto the public acts were signed by certain persons chosen by the Doge himself, and called Chancellors ; but the Grand Council, which we find always solicitous to limit the power of the Doge, thought *that* method improper ; and now proposed, that a
Chancellor

Chancellor should be appointed by themselves, with rights and privileges entirely independent of the Doge. At the same time, as the people had shewn symptoms of discontent, on account of the great offices being all in the distinguished families, it was thought expedient to ordain, that the Chancellor should always be taken from among the Secretaries of the senate, who were citizens. Afterwards, when the council of ten came to be established, it was ordained, that the Chancellor might be chosen either from the Secretaries of that court, or from those of the senate,

The Grand Chancellor of Venice is an officer of great dignity and importance; he has the keeping of the great seal of the Commonwealth, and is privy to all the secrets of the State; he is considered as the head of the order of citizens, and his office is the most lucrative in the republic; yet, though he must be present
at

at all the councils, he has no deliberative voice.

In perusing the annals of this republic, we continually meet with proofs of the restless jealousy of this government; even the private œconomy of families sometimes created suspicion, however blameless the public conduct of the master might be. The present Doge had married a foreign lady; his two sons followed his example; one of their wives was a princess. This gave umbrage to the senate; they thought that, by such means, the nobles might acquire an interest, and connexions, in other countries, inconsistent with their duty as citizens of Venice; and therefore, in the interregnum which followed the death of Theipolo, a law was proposed by the Correctors, and immediately passed, by which all future Doges, and their sons, were interdicted from marriage with foreigners, under

under the pain of being excluded from the office of Doge.

Though the people had been gradually, as we have seen, deprived of their original right of electing the chief magistrate; yet, on the elections which succeeded the establishment of the new mode, the Doge had always been presented to the multitude assembled in St. Mark's Place, as if requesting their approbation; and the people, flattered with this small degree of attention, had never failed to announce their satisfaction by repeated shouts: but the senate seem to have been afraid of leaving them even this empty shadow of their ancient power; for they ordained, that, instead of presenting the Doge to the multitude, to receive their acclamations, as formerly, a Syndic, for the future, should, in the name of the people, congratulate the new Doge on his election. On this occasion, the senate do

do not seem to have acted with their usual discernment. Show often affects the minds of men more than substance, as appeared in the present instance; for the Venetian populace displayed more resentment on being deprived of this noisy piece of form, than when the substantial right had been taken from them. After the death of the Doge John Dandolo, before a new election could take place in the usual forms, a prodigious multitude assembled in St. Mark's Place, and, with loud acclamations, proclaimed James Theipolo; declaring, that this was more binding than any other mode of election, and that he was Doge to all intents and purposes. While the senate remained in fearful suspense for the consequences of an event so alarming and unlooked-for, they were informed, that Theipolo had withdrawn himself from the city, with a determination to remain concealed, till he heard how the senate and people would settle the dispute.

The

The people, having no person of weight to conduct or head them, renounced, with their usual fickleness, a project which they had begun with their usual intrepidity.

The Grand Council, freed from alarm, proceeded to a regular election, and chose Peter Gradonico, a man of enterprise, firmness, and address, in whose reign we shall see the dying embers of democracy perfectly extinguished.

LETTER XII.

Venice.

GRadonico, from the moment he was in possession of the office of Doge, formed a scheme of depriving the people of all their remaining power. An aversion to popular government, and resentment of some signs of personal dislike, which the populace had shewn at his election, seem to have been his only motives; for, while he completely annihilated the ancient rights of the people, he shewed no inclination to augment the power of his own office.

Although the people had experienced many mortifying deviations from the old constitution, yet, as the Grand Council was chosen annually, by electors of their

own nomination, they flattered themselves that they still retained an important share in the government. It was this last hold of their declining freedom which Gradonico meditated to remove, for ever, from their hands. Such a project was of a nature to have intimidated a man of less courage; but his natural intrepidity, animated by resentment, made him overlook all dangers and difficulties.

He began (as if by way of experiment) with some alterations respecting the manner of choosing the Grand Council; these, however, occasioned murmurs; and it was feared, that dangerous tumults would arise at the next election of that court.

But, superior to fear, Gradonico inspired others with courage; and, before the period of the election arrived, he struck the decisive blow.

A law

A law was published in the year 1297, by which it was ordained, that those who actually belonged to the Grand Council, should continue members of it for life; and that the same right should descend to their posterity, without any form of election whatever. This was at once forming a body of hereditary legislative nobility, and establishing a complete aristocracy, upon the ruins of the ancient popular government.

This measure struck all the citizens, who were not then of the Grand Council, with concern and astonishment; but, in a particular manner, those of ancient and noble families; for although, as has been already observed, there was, strictly speaking, no nobility with exclusive privileges before this law, yet there were in Venice, as there must be in the most democratical republics, certain families considered as more honourable than others, many of whom

found themselves, by this law, thrown into a rank inferior to that of the least considerable person who happened, at this important period, to be a member of the Grand Council. To conciliate the minds of such dangerous malcontents, exceptions were made in their favour, and some of the most powerful were immediately received into the Grand Council; and to others it was promised that they should, at some future period, be admitted. By such hopes, artfully insinuated, and by the great influence of the members who actually composed the Grand Council, all immediate insurrections were prevented; and foreign wars, and objects of commerce, soon turned the people's attention from this mortifying change in the nature of the government.

A strong resentment of those innovations, however, festered in the breasts of some individuals, who, a few years after, under the direction of one Marino Bocconi, formed

formed a design to assassinate Gradonico, and massacre all the Grand Council, without distinction. This plot was discovered, and the chiefs, after confessing their crimes, were executed between the pillars.

The conspiracy of Bocconi was confined to malcontents of the rank of citizens; but one of a more dangerous nature, and which originated among the nobles themselves, was formed in the year 1309.

This combination was made up of some of the most distinguished of those who were not of the Grand Council when the reform took place, and who had not been admitted afterwards, according to their expectations; and of some others of very ancient families, who could not bear to see so many citizens raised to a level with themselves, and who, besides, were piqued at what they called the Pride of Gradonico. These men chose for their leader, the son of James

Theipolo, who had been proclaimed Doge by the populace. Their object was, to dispossess Gradonico, and restore the ancient constitution; they were soon joined by a great many of inferior rank, within the city, and they engaged considerable numbers of their friends and dependents from Padua, and the adjacent country, to come to Venice, and assist them, at the time appointed for the insurrection. Considering the numbers that were privy to this undertaking, it is astonishing that it was not discovered till the night preceding that on which it was to have taken place. The uncommon concourse of strangers created the first suspicion, which was confirmed by the confession of some who were acquainted with the design. The Doge immediately summoned the council, and sent expresses to the governors of the neighbouring towns and forts, with orders for them to hasten with their forces to Venice. The conspirators were not disconcerted; they assembled,

bled, and attacked the Doge and his friends, who were collected in a body around the palace. The Place of St. Mark was the scene of this tumultuous battle, which lasted many hours, but was attended with more noise and terror among the inhabitants, than bloodshed to the combatants. Some of the military governors arriving with troops, the contest ended in the rout of the conspirators. A few nobles had been killed in the engagement; a greater number were executed by order of the senate. Theipolo, who had fled, was declared infamous, and an enemy to his country; his goods and fortune were confiscated, and his house razed to the ground. After these executions, it was thought expedient, to receive into the Grand Council, several of the most distinguished families of citizens.

Those two conspiracies having immediately followed one another, spread an

universal diffidence and dread over the city, and gave rise to the court called the Council of Ten, which was erected about this time, merely as a temporary Tribunal, to examine into the causes, punish the accomplices, and destroy the seeds of the late conspiracy; but which, in the sequel, became permanent. I shall wave farther mention of this court, till we come to the period when the State Inquisitors were established; but it is proper to mention, that the Ecclesiastical Court of Inquisition was also erected at Venice, in the reign of the Doge Gradenigo.

The Popes had long endeavoured to introduce this court into every country in Europe; they succeeded too well in many; but though it was not entirely rejected by the State of Venice, yet it was accepted under such restrictions as have prevented the dismal cruelties which accompany it in other countries.

This

This republic seems, at all times, to have a strong impression of the ambitious and encroaching spirit of the court of Rome; and has, on all occasions, shewn the greatest unwillingness to entrust power in the hands of ecclesiastics. Of this, the Venetians gave an undoubted proof at present; for while they established a new civil Court of Inquisition, with the most unlimited powers, they would not receive the ecclesiastical inquisitions, except on conditions to which it had not been subjected in any other country.

The court of Rome never displayed more address than in its attempts to elude those limitations, and to prevail on the senate to admit the inquisition at Venice, on the same footing as it had been received elsewhere; but the senate was as firm as the Pope was artful, and the Court of Inquisition was at last established, under the following conditions:

That

That three commissioners from the Senate should attend the deliberations of that court, none of whose decrees could be executed without the approbation of the commissioners.

Those commissioners were to take no oath of fidelity, or engagement of any kind, to the Inquisition; but were bound by oath to conceal nothing from the senate which should pass in the Holy Office.

That heresy should be the only crime cognisable by the Inquisition; and, in case of the conviction and condemnation of any criminal, his goods and money should not belong to the court, but to his natural heirs.

That Jews and Greeks should be indulged in the exercise of their religion, without being disturbed by this court.

The

The commissioners were to prevent the registration of any statute made at Rome; or any where out of the Venetian State.

The Inquisitors were not permitted to condemn books as heretical, without the concurrence of the Senate; nor were they allowed to judge any to be so, but those already condemned by the edict of Clement VIII.

Such were the restrictions under which the Inquisition was established at Venice; and nothing can more clearly prove their efficacy, than a comparison of their numbers, who have suffered for heresy here, with those who have been condemned to death by that court in every other place where it was established.

An instance is recorded of a man, named Narino, being condemned to a public punishment, for having composed a book

in defence of the opinions of John Hufs. For this (the greatest of all crimes in the sight of Inquisitors) his sentence was, that he should be exposed publicly on a scaffold, dressed in a gown, with flames and devils painted on it. The moderation of the civil magistrate appears in this sentence. Without his interposition, the flames which surrounded the prisoner would, in all probability, not have been *painted*. This, which is mentioned in the History of Venice as an instance of severity, happened at a time, when, in Spain and Portugal, many wretches were burnt, by order of the Inquisition, for smaller offences.

In 1354, during the interregnum after the death of Andrew Dandolo, it was proposed, by the Correctors of Abuses, that, for the future, the three chiefs of the Criminal Council of Forty should be members of the College; and this passed into a law.

It may be necessary to mention, that the College, otherwise called the Seignior, is the supreme cabinet council of the State. This court was originally composed of the Doge and six counsellors only; but to these, at different periods, were added; first, six of the Grand Council, chosen by the Senate; they were called Savii, or Sages, from their supposed wisdom; and afterwards, five Savii, of the Terra Firma, whose more immediate duty is to superintend the business of the towns and provinces belonging to the republic, on the continent of Europe, particularly what regards the troops. At one time there were also five Savii for maritime affairs, but they had little business after the Venetian navy became inconsiderable; and now, in the room of them, five young noblemen are chosen by the Senate every six months, who attend the meetings of the Seignior, without having a vote, though

though they give their opinions when asked. This is by way of instructing, and rendering them fit for the affairs of State. They are called Sages of the Orders, and are chosen every six months.

To those were added, the three chiefs of the Criminal Court of Forty; the court then consisting, in all, of twenty-six members.

The College is, at once, the cabinet council, and the representative of the republic. This court gives audience, and delivers answers, in the name of the republic, to foreign Ambassadors, to the deputies of towns and provinces, and to the generals of the army; it also receives all requests and memorials on State affairs, summons the Senate at pleasure, and arranges the business to be discussed in that assembly.

In

In the Venetian government, great care is taken to balance the power of one court by that of another, and to make them reciprocal checks on each other. It was probably from a jealousy of the power of the College, that three chiefs of the Criminal Court of Forty were now added to it.

LETTER XIII.

Venice.

THE history of no nation presents a greater variety of singular events than that of Venice. We have seen a conspiracy against this State, originating among the citizens, and carried on by people of that rank only. We saw another, soon after, which took its origin among the body of the nobles; but the year 1355 presents us with one of a still more extraordinary nature, begun, and carried on, by the Doge himself. If ambition, or the augmentation of his own power, had been the object, it would not have been so surprising; but his motive to the conspiracy was as small as the intention was dreadful.

Marino

Marino Falliero, Doge of Venice, was, at this time, eighty years of age; a time of life when the violence of the passions is generally pretty much abated. He had, even then, however, given a strong instance of the rashness of his disposition, by marrying a very young woman. This lady imagined she had been affronted by a young Venetian nobleman at a public ball, and she complained bitterly of the insult to her husband. The old Doge, who had all the desire imaginable to please his wife, determined, in this matter at least, to give her ample satisfaction.

The delinquent was brought before the Judges, and the crime was exaggerated with all the eloquence that money could purchase; but they viewed the affair with unprejudiced eyes, and pronounced a sentence no more than adequate to the crime. The Doge was filled with the most extravagant rage, and, finding that the body of

the nobles took no share in his wrath, he entered into a conspiracy with the Admiral of the Arsenal, and some others, who were discontented with the government on other accounts, and projected a method of vindicating his wife's honour, which seems rather violent for the occasion. It was resolved by those desperadoes, to massacre the whole Grand Council. Such a scene of bloodshed, on account of one woman, has not been imagined since the Trojan war.

This plot was conducted with more secrecy than could have been expected, from a man who seems to have been deprived of reason, as well as humanity. Every thing was prepared; and the day, previous to that which was fixed for the execution, had arrived, without any person, but those concerned in the conspiracy, having the least knowledge of the horrid design.

It was discovered in the same manner in which that against the King and Parliament of England, was brought to light in the time of James the First.

Bertrand Bergameſe, one of the conſpirators, being deſirous to ſave Nicolas Lioni, a noble Venetian, from the general maſſacre, called on him, and earneſtly admoniſhed him, on no account, to go out of his houſe the following day; for, if he did, he would certainly loſe his life. Lioni preſſed him to give ſome reaſon for this extraordinary advice; which the other obſtinately reſuſing, Lioni ordered him to be ſeized, and confined; and, ſending for ſome of his friends of the Senate, by means of promiſes and threats, they at length prevailed on the priſoner to diſcover the whole of this horrid myſtery.

They ſend for the Avogadors, the Council of Ten, and other high officers, by

whom the prisoner was examined ; after which, orders were given for seizing the principal conspirators in their houses, and for summoning those of the nobility and citizens, on whose fidelity the Council could rely. These measures could not be taken so secretly as not to alarm many, who found means to make their escape. A considerable number were arrested, among whom were two chiefs of the conspiracy under the Doge. They being put to the question, confessed the whole. It appeared, that only a select body of the principal men had been privy to the real design ; great numbers had been desired to be prepared with arms, at a particular hour, when they would be employed in attacking certain enemies of the State, which were not named ; they were desired to keep those orders a perfect secret, and were told, that upon their fidelity and secrecy their future fortunes depended. Those men did not know of each other, and had no suspicion
that

that it was not a lawful enterprise for which they were thus engaged ; they were therefore set at liberty ; but all the chiefs of the plot gave the fullest evidence against the Doge. It was proved, that the whole scheme had been formed by his direction, and supported by his influence. After the principal conspirators were tried, and executed, the Council of Ten next proceeded to the trial of the Doge himself. They desired that twenty senators, of the highest reputation, might assist upon this solemn occasion ; and that two relations of the Fallier family, one of whom was a member of the Council of Ten, and the other an Avogador, might withdraw from the court.

The Doge, who hitherto had remained under a guard in his own apartments in the palace, was now brought before this Tribunal of his own subjects. He was dressed in the robes of his office.

It is thought he intended to have denied the charge, and attempted a defence; but when he perceived the number and nature of the proofs against him, overwhelmed by their force, he acknowledged his guilt, with many fruitless and abject intreaties for mercy.

That a man, of eighty years of age, should lose all firmness on such an occasion, is not marvellous; that he should have been incited, by a trifling offence, to such an inhuman, and such a deliberate plan of wickedness, is without example.

He was sentenced to lose his head. The sentence was executed in the place where the Doges are usually crowned.

In the Great Chamber of the palace, where the portraits of the Doges are placed, there is a vacant space between the portraits of Fallier's immediate predecessor

decessor and successor, with this inscription :

Locus Marini Fallieri decapitati.

The only other instance which history presents to our contemplation, of a sovereign tried according to the forms of law, and condemned to death by a Tribunal of his own subjects, is that of Charles the First, of Great Britain. But how differently are we affected by a review of the two cases !

In the one, the original errors of the misguided Prince are forgotten in the severity of his fate, and in the calm majestic firmness with which he bore it. Those who, from public spirit, had opposed the unconstitutional measures of his government, were no more ; and the men now in power were actuated by far different principles. All the passions of humanity, therefore, take part with the royal suf-

ferer; nothing but the ungenerous spirit of party can seduce them to the side of his enemies. In his trial we behold, with a mixture of pity and indignation, the unhappy monarch delivered up to the malice of hypocrites, the rage of fanatics, and the insolence of a low-born law ruffian.

In the other, every sentiment of compassion is effaced by horror, at the enormity of the crime.

In the year 1361, after the death of the Doge John Delfino, when the last electors were confined in the Ducal Chamber to choose his successor, and while the election vibrated between three candidates, a report arrived at Venice, that Laurentius Celsus, who commanded the fleet, had obtained a complete victory over the Genoese, who were at that time at war with the Venetians. This intelligence was communicated to the electors, who immediately dropped
all

all the three candidates, and unanimously chose this commander. Soon after, it was found, that the rumour of the victory was entirely groundless. This could not affect the validity of the election; but it produced a decree to prevent, on future occasions of the same kind, all communication between the people without, and the conclave of electors.

This Doge's father displayed a singular instance of weakness and vanity, which some of the historians have thought worth transmitting to us. I do not know for what reason, unless it be to comfort posterity with the reflection, that human folly is much the same in all ages, and that their ancestors have not been a great deal wiser than themselves. This old gentleman thought it beneath the dignity of a father to pull off his cap to his own son; and that he might not seem to condescend so far, even when all the other nobles shewed
this

this mark of respect to their sovereign, he went, from the moment of his son's election, upon all occasions, and in all weathers, with his head uncovered. The Doge being solicitous for his father's health, and finding that no persuasion, nor explanation of the matter, that could be given, were sufficient to overcome this obstinacy, recollected that he was as devout as he was vain, which suggested an expedient that had the desired effect. He placed a cross on the front of his ducal coronet. The old man was as desirous to testify his respect to the cross, as he was averse to pay obeisance to his son; and unable to devise any way of pulling off a cap which he never wore, his piety, at length, got the better of his pride; he resumed his cap, as formerly, that, as often as his son appeared, he might pull it off in honour of the cross.

During the reign of Laurentius Celsus, the celebrated poet Petrarch, who resided for
some

some time at Venice, and was pleased with the manners of the people, and the wisdom of their government, made a present to the republic, of his collection of books ; which, at that time, was reckoned very valuable. This was the foundation of the great library of St. Mark.

In perusing the annals of Venice, we continually meet with new institutions. No sooner is any inconveniency perceived, than measures are taken to remove it, or guard against its effects. About this time, three new magistrates were appointed, whose duty is to prevent all ostentatious luxuries in dress, equipage, and other expensive superfluities, and to prosecute those who transgress the sumptuary laws, which comprehend such objects. Those magistrates are called *Sopra Proveditori alle Pompé*; they were allowed a discretionary power of levying fines, from people of certain professions, who deal entirely in articles of luxury.

luxury. Of this number, that of public courtesans was reckoned. This profession, according to all accounts, formerly flourished at Venice, with a degree of splendour unknown in any other capital of Europe; and very considerable exactions were raised to the use of the State, at particular times, from the wealthiest of those dealers. This excise, it would appear, has been pushed beyond what the trade could bear; for it is at present in a state of wretchedness and decay; the best of the business, as is said, being now carried on, for mere pleasure, by people who do not avow themselves of the profession.

LETTER XIV.

Venice.

NO government was ever more punctual, and impartial, than that of Venice, in the execution of the laws. This was thought essential to the well-being, and very existence, of the State. For this, all respect for individuals, all private considerations whatever, and every compunctious feeling of the heart, is sacrificed. To execute law with all the rigour of justice, is considered as the chief virtue of a judge; and, as there are cases in which the sternest may relent, the Venetian government has taken care to appoint certain magistrates, whose sole business is to see that others perform their duty upon all occasions.

All

All this is very fine in the abstract, but we often find it detestable in the application.

In the year 1400, while Antonio Venier was Doge, his son having committed an offence which evidently sprung from mere youthful levity, and nothing worse, was condemned in a fine of one hundred ducats, and to be imprisoned for a certain time.

While the young man was in prison, he fell sick, and petitioned to be removed to a purer air. The Doge rejected the petition; declaring, that the sentence must be executed literally; and that his son must take the fortune of others in the same predicament. The youth was much beloved, and many applications were made, that the sentence might be softened, on account of the danger which threatened him. The father was inexorable, and the son died in prison.

prison. Of whatever refined substance this man's heart may have been composed, I am better pleased that mine is made of the common materials.

Carlo Zeno was accused, by the Council of Ten, of having received a sum of money from Francis Carraro, son of the Seignior of Padua, contrary to an express law, which forbids all subjects of Venice, on any pretext whatever, accepting any salary, pension, or gratification, from a foreign Prince, or State. This accusation was grounded on a paper found among Carraro's accounts, when Padua was taken by the Venetians. In this paper was an article of four hundred ducats paid to Carlo Zeno, who declared, in his defence, that while he was, by the Senate's permission, governor of the Milanese, he had visited Carraro, then a prisoner in the castle of Asti; and finding him in want of common necessaries,

8 he

he had advanced to him the sum in question ; and that this Prince, having been liberated some short time after, had, on his return to Padua, repaid the money.

Zeno was a man of acknowledged candour, and of the highest reputation ; he had commanded the fleets and armies of the State with the most brilliant success ; yet neither this, nor any other considerations, prevailed on the Court to depart from their usually severity. They owned that, from Zeno's usual integrity, there was no reason to doubt the truth of his declaration ; but the assertions of an accused person were not sufficient to efface the force of the presumptive circumstances which appeared against him.—His declaration might be convincing to those who knew him intimately, but was not legal evidence of his innocence ; and they adhered to a distinguishing maxim of this Court, that it is of more importance to the
State,

State, to intimidate every one from even the appearance of such a crime, than to allow a person, against whom a presumption of guilt remained, to escape, however innocent he might be. This man, who had rendered the most essential services to the republic, and had gained many victories, was condemned to be removed from all his offices, and to be imprisoned for two years.

But the most affecting instance of the odious inflexibility of Venetian courts, appears in the case of Foscari, son to the Doge of that name.

This young man had, by some imprudences, given offence to the Senate, and was, by their orders, confined at Treviso, when Almor Donato, one of the Council of Ten, was assassinated, on the 5th of November 1750, as he entered his own house.

A reward, in ready money, with pardon for this, or any other crime, and a pension of two hundred ducats, revertible to children, was promised to any person who would discover the planner, or perpetrator, of this crime. No such discovery was made.

One of young Foscarì's footmen, named Olivier, had been observed loitering near Donato's house on the evening of the murder;—he fled from Venice next morning. These, with other circumstances of less importance, created a strong suspicion that Foscarì had engaged this man to commit the murder.

Olivier was taken, brought to Venice, put to the torture, and confessed nothing; yet the Council of Ten, being prepossessed with an opinion of their guilt, and imagining that the master would have less resolution, used him in the same cruel manner.—The

unhappy young man, in the midst of his agony, continued to assert, that he knew nothing of the assassination. This convinced the Court of his firmness, but not of his innocence; yet as there was no legal proof of his guilt, they could not sentence him to death. He was condemned to pass the rest of his life in banishment, at Canéa, in the island of Candia.

This unfortunate youth bore his exile with more impatience than he had done the rack; he often wrote to his relations and friends, praying them to intercede in his behalf, that the term of his banishment might be abridged, and that he might be permitted to return to his family before he died.—All his applications were fruitless; those to whom he addressed himself had never interfered in his favour, for fear of giving offence to the obdurate Council, or had interfered in vain.

M 2

After

After languishing five years in exile, having lost all hope of return, through the interposition of his own family, or countrymen, in a fit of despair he addressed the Duke of Milan, putting him in mind of services which the Doge, his father, had rendered him, and begging that he would use his powerful influence with the State of Venice, that his sentence might be recalled. He entrusted his letter to a merchant, going from Canéa to Venice, who promised to take the first opportunity of sending it from thence to the Duke; instead of which, this wretch, as soon as he arrived at Venice, delivered it to the chiefs of the Council of Ten.

This conduct of young Foscarì appeared criminal in the eyes of those judges; for, by the laws of the republic, all its subjects are expressly forbid claiming the protection of foreign Princes, in any thing which relates to the government of Venice.

Foscarì

Foscari was therefore ordered to be brought from Candia, and shut up in the State prison. There the chiefs of the Council of Ten ordered him once more to be put to the torture, to draw from him the motives which determined him to apply to the Duke of Milan. Such an exertion of law is, indeed, the most flagrant injustice.

The miserable youth declared to the Council, that he had wrote the letter, in the full persuasion that the merchant, whose character he knew, would betray him, and deliver it to them; the consequence of which, he foresaw, would be, his being ordered back a prisoner to Venice, the only means he had in his power of seeing his parents and friends; a pleasure for which he had languished, with unsurmountable desire, for some time, and which he was willing to purchase at the expence of any danger or pain.

The Judges, little affected with this generous instance of filial piety, ordained, that the unhappy young man should be carried back to Candia, and there be imprisoned for a year, and remain banished to that island for life; with this condition, that if he should make any more applications to foreign Powers, his imprisonment should be perpetual. At the same time they gave permission, that the Doge, and his lady, might visit their unfortunate son.

The Doge was, at this time, very old; he had been in possession of the office above thirty years. Those wretched parents had an interview with their son in one of the apartments of the palace; they embraced him with all the tenderness which his misfortunes, and his filial affection, deserved. The father exhorted him to bear his hard fate with firmness; the son protested, in the most moving terms, that this was not in his power; that however
others

others could support the dismal loneliness of a prison, he could not; that his heart was formed for friendship, and the reciprocal endearments of social life; without which his soul sunk into dejection worse than death, from which alone he should look for relief, if he should again be confined to the horrors of a prison; and melting into tears, he sunk at his father's feet, imploring him to take compassion on a son who had ever loved him with the most dutiful affection, and who was perfectly innocent of the crime of which he was accused; he conjured him, by every bond of nature and religion, by the bowels of a father, and the mercy of a Redeemer, to use his influence with the Council to mitigate their sentence, that he might be saved from the most cruel of all deaths, that of expiring under the slow tortures of a broken heart, in a horrible banishment from every creature he loved.—“My son,” replied the Doge, “submit to the laws of your country,

“and do not ask of me what it is not in
“my power to obtain.”

Having made this effort, he retired to another apartment; and, unable to support any longer the acuteness of his feelings, he sunk into a state of insensibility, in which condition he remained till some time after his son had sailed on his return to Candia.

Nobody has presumed to describe the anguish of the wretched mother; those who are endowed with the most exquisite sensibility, and who have experienced distresses in some degree similar, will have the justest idea of what it was.

The accumulated misery of those unhappy parents touched the hearts of some of the most powerful senators, who applied with so much energy for a complete pardon for young Foscarei, that they were on the

point of obtaining it; when a vessel arrived from Candia, with tidings, that the miserable youth had expired in prison a short time after his return.

Some years after this, Nicholas Erizzo, a noble Venetian, being on his death-bed, confessed that, bearing a violent resentment against the Senator Donato, he had committed the affassination for which the unhappy family of Foscari had suffered so much.

At this time the sorrows of the Doge were at an end; he had existed only a few months after the death of his son. His life had been prolonged, till he beheld his son persecuted to death for an infamous crime; but not till he should see this foul stain washed from his family, and the innocence of his beloved son made manifest to the world.

The

The ways of heaven never appeared more dark and intricate, than in the incidents and catastrophe of this mournful story. To reconcile the permission of such events, to our ideas of infinite power and goodness, however difficult, is a natural attempt in the human mind, and has exercised the ingenuity of philosophers in all ages; while, in the eyes of Christians, those seeming perplexities afford an additional proof, that there will be a future state, in which the ways of God to man will be fully justified.

LETTER XV.

Venice.

I Deferred giving you any account of the Council of Ten, till I came to mention the State Inquisitors, as the last was ingrafted on the former, and was merely intended to strengthen the hands, and augment the power, of that court.

The Council of Ten consists, in effect, of seventeen members; for, besides the ten noblemen chosen annually by the Grand Council, from whose number this court receives its name, the Doge presides, and the six Counsellors of the Seigniorie assist, when they think proper, at all deliberations.

This court was first instituted in the year 1310, immediately after Theipolo's conspiracy.

It

It is supreme in all State crimes. It is the duty of three chiefs, chosen every month from this court, by lot, to open all letters addressed to it; to report the contents, and assemble the members, when they think proper. They have the power of seizing accused persons, examining them in prison, and taking their answers in writing, with the evidence against them; which being laid before the court, those chiefs appear as prosecutors.

The prisoners, all this time, are kept in close confinement, deprived of the company of relations and friends, and not allowed to receive any advice by letters. They can have no counsel to assist them, unless one of the Judges chooses to assume that office; in which case he is permitted to manage their defence, and plead their cause; after which the Court decide, by a majority of votes, acquitting the prisoner, or condemning him to private or public execution,

execution, as they think proper; and if any persons murmur at the fate of their relations or friends, and talk of their innocence, and the injustice they have met with, these malcontents are in great danger of meeting with the same fate.

I am convinced you will think, that such a court was sufficiently powerful to answer every good purpose of government. This, it would appear, was not the opinion of the Grand Council of Venice; who thought proper, in the year 1501, to create the Tribunal of State Inquisitors, which is still more despotic and brief in its manner of proceeding.

This court consists of three members, all taken from the Council of Ten; two literally from the Ten, and the third from the Counsellors of the Seigniorie, who also make a part of that Council.

These

These three persons have the power of deciding, without appeal, on the lives of every citizen belonging to the Venetian State; the highest of the nobility, even the Doge himself, not being excepted. They keep the keys of the boxes into which anonymous informations are thrown. The informers who expect a recompence, cut off a little piece of their letter, which they afterwards shew to the Inquisitor when they claim a reward. To those three Inquisitors is given, the right of employing spies, considering secret intelligence, issuing orders to seize all persons whose words or actions they think reprehensible, and afterwards trying them when they think proper. If all the three are of one opinion, no farther ceremony is necessary; they may order the prisoner to be strangled in prison, drowned in the Canal Orfano, hanged privately in the night-time, between the pillars, or executed publicly, as they please;

please ; and whatever their decision be, no farther inquisition can be made on the subject ; but if any one of the three differs in opinion from his brethren, the cause must be carried before the full assembly of the Council of Ten. One would naturally imagine, that by those the prisoner would have a good chance of being acquitted ; because the difference in opinion of the three Inquisitors shews, that the case is, at least, dubious ; and in dubious cases one would expect the leaning would be to the favourable side ; but this court is governed by different maxims from those you are acquainted with. It is a rule here to admit of smaller presumptions in all crimes which affect the Government, than in other cases ; and the only difference they make between a crime fully proved, and one more doubtful, is, that, in the first case, the execution is in broad day-light ; whereas, when there are doubts of the prisoner's guilt, he is only put to death privately.

The

The State Inquisitors have keys to every apartment of the Ducal palace, and can, when they think proper, penetrate into the very bed-chamber of the Doge, open his cabinet, and examine his papers. Of course they may command access to the house of every individual in the State. They continue in office only one year, but are not responsible afterwards for their conduct while they were in authority.

Can you think you would be perfectly composed, and easy in your mind, if you lived in the same city with three persons, who had the power of shutting you up in a dungeon, and putting you to death when they pleased, and without being accountable for so doing?

If, from the characters of the Inquisitors of one year, a man had nothing to dread, still he might fear that a set, of a different character, might be in authority the next;
and

and although he were persuaded, that the Inquisitors would always be chosen from among men of the most known integrity in the State, he might tremble at the malice of informers, and secret enemies; a combination of whom might impose on the understandings of upright Judges, especially where the accused is excluded from his friends, and denied counsel to assist him in his defence; for, let him be never so conscious of innocence, he cannot be sure of remaining unsuspected, or unaccused; nor can he be certain, that he shall not be put to the rack, to supply a deficiency of evidence: and finally, although a man were naturally possessed of so much firmness of character as to feel no inquietude from any of those considerations on his own account, he might still be under apprehensions for his children, and other connexions, for whom some men feel more anxiety than for themselves.

Such reflections naturally arise in the minds of those who have been born, and accustomed to live, in a free country, where no such despotic Tribunal is established; yet we find people apparently easy in the midst of all those dangers; nay, we know that mankind shew the same indifference in cities, where the Emperor, or the Bashaw, amuses himself, from time to time, in cutting off the heads of those he happens to meet with in his walks; and I make no doubt, that if it were usual for the earth to open, and swallow a proportion of its inhabitants every day, mankind would behold this with as much coolness as at present they read the bills of mortality. Such is the effect of habit on the human mind, and so wonderfully does it accommodate itself to those evils for which there is no remedy.

But these considerations do not account for the Venetian nobles suffering such

Tribunals as those of the Council of Ten, or the State Inquisitors, to exist, because these are evils which it unquestionably is in their power to remedy ; and attempts have been made, at various times, by parties of the nobility, to remove them entirely, but without success; the majority of the Grand Council having, upon trial, been found for preserving these institutions.

It is believed to be owing to the attention of these courts, that the Venetian republic has lasted longer than any other ; but, in my opinion, the chief object of a government should be, to render the people happy ; and if it fails in that, the longer it lasts, so much the worse. If they are rendered miserable by that which is supposed to preserve the State, they cannot be losers by removing it, be the consequence what it may ; and I fancy most people would rather live in a convenient, comfortable house, which could stand only a few centuries, than in a gloomy gothic fabric, which would last to the day

of judgment. These despotic courts, the State Inquisitors, and Council of Ten, have had their admirers, not only among the Venetian nobility, but among foreigners; even among such as have, on other occasions, professed principles very unfavourable to arbitrary power.

I find the following passage in a letter of Bishop Burnet, relating to Venice:

“ But this leads me to say a little to you
 “ of that part of the constitution, which is
 “ so censured by strangers, but is really
 “ both the greatest glory, and the chief
 “ security, of this republic; which is, the
 “ unlimited power of the Inquisitors, that
 “ extends not only to the chief of the
 “ nobility, but to the Duke himself; who
 “ is so subject to them, that they may not
 “ only give him severe reprimands, but
 “ search his papers, make his process, and,
 “ in conclusion, put him to death, without
 “ being bound to give any account of their
 “ proceedings, except to the Council of
 “ Ten.

“ Ten. This is the dread, not only of all
“ the subjects, but of the whole nobility,
“ and all that bear office in the republic,
“ and makes the greatest amongst them
“ tremble, and so obliges them to an exact
“ conduct.”

Now, for my part, I cannot help thinking, that a Tribunal which keeps the Doge, the nobility, and *all* the subjects, in dread, and makes the greatest among them tremble, can be no great blessing in any State. To be in continual fear, is certainly a very unhappy situation; and if the Doge, the nobility, and *all* the subjects, are rendered unhappy, I should imagine, with all submission, that the glory and security of the rest of the republic must be of very small importance.

In the same letter which I have quoted above, his Lordship, speaking of the State Inquisitors, has these words: “ When
“ they find any fault, they are so inexo-
“ rable, and so quick as well as severe in

“ their justice, that the very fear of this is
“ so effectual a restraint, that, perhaps, the
“ only preservation of Venice, and of its
“ liberty, is owing to this single piece of
“ their constitution.”

How would you, my good friend, relish that kind of liberty in England, which could not be preserved without the assistance of a despotic court? Such an idea of liberty might have been announced from the throne, as one of the mysteries of Government, by James the First, or the Second; but we are amazed to find it published by a counsellor, and admirer of William the Third. It may, indeed, be said, that the smallness of the Venetian State, and its republican form of government, render it liable to be overturned by sudden tumults, or popular insurrections: this renders it the more necessary to keep a watchful eye over the conduct of individuals, and guard against every thing that may be the source of public commotion or disorder.

The

The institution of State Inquisitors may be thought to admit of some apology in this view, like the extraordinary and irregular punishment of the Ostracism established at Athens, which had a similar foundation. In a large State, or in a less popular form of government, the same dangers from civil commotions cannot be apprehended; similar precautions for preventing them are therefore superfluous; but, notwithstanding every apology that can be made, I am at a loss to account for the existence of this terrible Tribunal for so long a time in the Venetian republic, because all ranks seem to have an interest in its destruction; and I do not see on what principle any one man, or any set of men, should wish for its preservation. It cannot be the Doge, for the State Inquisitors keep him in absolute bondage; nor would one naturally imagine that the nobles would relish this court, for the nobles are more exposed to the jealousy of the State Inquisitors than the citizens, or inferior people; and least of all ought

the citizens to support a Tribunal, to which none of them can ever be admitted. As, however, the body of the nobility alone can remove this Tribunal from being part of the constitution, and yet, we find, they have always supported it; we must conclude, that a junto of that body which has sufficient influence to command a majority of their brethren, has always retained the power in their own hands, and found means of having the majority at least of the Council of Ten, chosen from their own members; so that this arbitrary court is, perhaps, always composed, by a kind of rotation, of the individuals of a junto. But if the possibility of this is denied, because of the precaution used in the form of electing by ballot, the only other way I can account for a Tribunal of such a nature being permitted to exist, is, by supposing that a majority of the Venetian nobles have so great a relish for unlimited power, that, to have a chance of enjoying it for a short

7 period,

period, they are willing to bear all the miseries of slavery for the rest of their lives.

The encouragement given by this Government to anonymous accusers, and secret informations, is attended with consequences which greatly outweigh any benefit that can arise from them. They must destroy mutual confidence, and promote suspicions and jealousies among neighbours; and, while they render all ranks of men fearful, they encourage them to be malicious. The laws ought to be able to protect every man who openly and boldly accuses another.

If any set of men, in a State, are so powerful, that it is dangerous for an individual to charge them with their crimes openly, there must be a weakness in that government which requires a speedy remedy; but let not that be a remedy worse than the disease.

It is no proof of the boasted wisdom of this Government, that, in the use of the torture,

torture, it imitates many European States, whose judicial regulations it has avoided where they seem far less censurable. The practice of forcing confession, and procuring evidence by this means, always appeared to me a complication of cruelty and absurdity. To make a man suffer more than the pains of death, that you may discover whether he deserves death, or not, is a manner of distributing justice which I cannot reconcile to my idea of equity.

If it is the intention of the Legislature, that every crime shall be expiated by the sufferings of somebody, and is regardless whether this expiation is made by the agonies of an innocent person, or a guilty, then there is no more to be said; but, if the intention be to discover the truth, this horrid device of the torture will very often fail; for nineteen people out of twenty will declare whatever they imagine will soonest put an end to their sufferings, whether it be truth or falsehood.

LETTER XVI.

Venice.

ALthough many important events have happened since the establishment of the State Inquisition, which have greatly affected the power, riches, and extent of dominion of this republic, yet the nature of the Government has remained much the same. In what I have to add, therefore, I shall be very short and general.

I have already observed, that it was the usual policy of this republic to maintain a neutrality, as long as possible, in all the wars which took place among her neighbours; and when obliged, contrary to her inclinations, to declare for either party, she generally joined with that State whose distant situation rendered its power and prosperity the least dangerous of the two to Venice.

This

This republic seems, however, to have too much neglected to form defensive alliances with other States, and by the continual jealousy she shewed of them, joined to her immense riches, at last became the object of the hatred and envy of all the Powers in Europe. This universal jealousy was roused, and brought into action, in the year 1508, by the intriguing genius of Pope Julius the Second. A confederacy was secretly entered into at Cambray, between Julius, the Emperor Maximilian, Lewis the Twelfth, and Ferdinand of Arragon, against the republic of Venice. A bare enumeration of the Powers which composed this league, gives a very high idea of the importance of the State against which it was formed.

The Duke of Savoy, the Duke of Ferrara, and the Duke of Mantua, acceded to this confederacy, and gave in claims to part of the dominions of Venice. It was not difficult to form pretensions to the best
part

part of the dominions of a State, which originally possessed nothing but a few marshy islands at the bottom of the Adriatic Gulph. It was the general opinion of Europe, that the league of Cambray would reduce Venice to her original possessions.

The Venetians, finding themselves deprived of all hopes of foreign assistance, sought support from their own courage, and resolved to meet the danger which threatened them, with the spirit of a brave and independent people.

Their General, Count Alviano, led an army against Lewis, who, being prepared before the other confederates, had already entered Italy. However great the magnanimity of the Senate, and the skill of their General, the soldiery were by no means equal to the disciplined troops of France, led by a martial nobility, and headed by a gallant monarch. The army of Alviano was defeated; new enemies poured on the republic from all sides; and she lost, in one campaign,

campaign, all the territories in Italy which she had been ages in acquiring.

Venice now found that she could no longer depend on her own strength and resources, and endeavoured to break, by policy, a combination which she had not force to resist. The Venetian Senate, knowing that Julius was the soul of the confederacy, offered to deliver up the towns he claimed, and made every other submission that could gratify the pride, and avert the anger, of that ambitious Pontiff; they also find means to separate Ferdinand from the alliance. Lewis and Maximilian being now their only enemies, the Venetians are able to sustain the war, till Julius, bearing no longer any resentment against the republic, and seized with remorse at beholding his native country ravaged by French and German armies, unites with Venice to drive the invaders out of Italy; and this republic is saved, with the loss of a small part of her Italian dominions, from a ruin which

which all Europe had considered as inevitable. The long and expensive wars between the different Powers of Europe, in which this State was obliged to take part, prove that her strength and resources were not exhausted.

In the year 1570, the Venetians were forced into a ruinous war with the Ottoman Empire, at a time when the Senate, sensible of the great need they stood in of repose, had, with much address and policy, kept clear of the quarrels which agitated the rest of Europe. But Solymon the Second, upon the most frivolous pretext, demanded from them the island of Cyprus.

It was evident to all the world, that he had no better foundation for this claim, than a strong desire, supported by a sufficient power, of conquering the island. This kind of right might not be thought complete in a court of equity; but, in the jurisprudence of monarchs, it has always been found preferable to every other.

The

The Turks make a descent, with a great army, on Cyprus ; they invest Famagousta, the capital ; the garrison defends it with the most obstinate bravery ; the Turks are repulsed in repeated assaults ; many thousands of them are slain ; but the ranks are constantly supplied by reinforcements. Antonio Bragadino, the commander, having displayed proofs of the highest military skill, and the most heroic courage, his garrison being quite exhausted with fatigue, and greatly reduced in point of numbers, is obliged to capitulate.

The terms were, that the garrison should march out with their arms, baggage, and three pieces of cannon, and should be transported to Candia in Turkish vessels ; that the citizens should not be pillaged, but allowed to retire with their effects.

Mustapha, the Turkish Bashaw, no sooner had possession of the place, than he delivered it up to be pillaged by the Janissaries ; the garrison were put in chains, and
made

made slaves on board the Turkish gallies. The principal officers were beheaded, and the gallant Bragadino was tied to a pillar, and, in the Bashaw's presence, flayed alive.

We meet with events in the annals of mankind, that make us doubt the truth of the most authentic history. We cannot believe that such actions have ever been committed by the inhabitants of this globe, and by creatures of the same species with ourselves. We are tempted to think we are perusing the records of hell, whose inhabitants, according to the most authentic accounts, derive a constant pleasure from the tortures of each other, as well as of all foreigners.

The conquest of the island of Cyprus is said to have cost the Turks fifty thousand lives. At this time, not Venice only, but all Christendom, had reason to dread the progress of the Turkish arms. The State of Venice solicited assistance from all the Ca-

tholic States ; but France was, at that time, in alliance with the Turks ; Maximilian dreaded their power ; the Crown of Portugal was possessed by a child, and Poland was exhausted by her wars with Russia. The Venetians, on this pressing occasion, received assistance from Rome, whose power they had so often resisted, and from Spain, their late enemy.

Pope Pius the Fifth, and Philip the Second, joined their fleets with that of the republic. The confederate fleet assembled at Messina. The celebrated Don John of Austria, natural son to Charles the Fifth, was Generalissimo ; Mark Antonio Colonna commanded the Pope's division, and Sebastian Veniero the Venetian. The Turkish fleet was greatly superior in the number of vessels.

The two fleets meet in the Gulph of Lapanta : it is said, that the Turkish gallies were entirely worked by Christian slaves, and the gallies of the Christians by Turkish ;

ish; a shocking proof of the barbarous manner in which prisoners of war were treated in that age; and, in this instance, as absurd as it was barbarous; for a cartel for an exchange of prisoners would have given freedom to the greater number of those unhappy men, without diminishing the strength of either navy. The fleets engage, and the Turks are entirely defeated. Historians assert, that twenty thousand Turks were killed in the engagement, and one half of their fleet destroyed. This is a prodigious number to be killed on one side, and in a sea fight; it ought to be remembered, that there is no Turkish writer on the subject.

Pius the Fifth died soon after the battle of Lapanta. Upon his death the war languished on the side of the Allies; Philip became tired of the expence, and the Venetians were obliged to purchase a peace, by yielding the island of Cyprus to the Turks, and agreeing to pay them, for three

years, an annual tribute of one hundred thousand ducats. Those circumstances have no tendency to confirm the accounts which Christian writers have given, of the immense loss which the Turks met with at the battle of Lapanta.

In the beginning of the seventeenth century, the republic had a dispute with the Pope, which, in that age, was thought a matter of importance, and engaged the attention of all Christendom.

Paul the Fifth shewed as eager a disposition as any of his predecessors, to extend the Papal authority. He had an inveterate prejudice against the Venetian republic, on account of her having, on every occasion, resisted all ecclesiastical encroachments.

He sought, with impatience, an opportunity of manifesting his hatred, and expected that he should be assisted by the pious Princes of Europe, in bringing this refractory

tory child of the church to reason. He began by demanding a sum of money, for the purpose of carrying on the war against the Turks in Hungary; he complained of certain decrees of the Senate, relating to the internal government of the republic, particularly one which forbade the building of any more new churches, without the permission of that assembly, and which, he said, smelt strongly of heresy; and above all, he exclaimed against the Council of Ten, for having imprisoned an Ecclesiastic, and prepared to bring him to a public trial. This reverend person, for whom his Holiness interested himself so warmly, was accused of having poisoned five people, one of whom was his own father. He was also accused of having caused another to be assassinated; and, to prevent a discovery, had afterwards poisoned the assassin.

The Senate refused the money, confirmed their decree against the building of

churches, and applauded the conduct of the Council of Ten, in prosecuting the Ecclesiastic.

The authors of the age arranged themselves on the one side, or the other, and this became a war of controversy; in which, though there was no blood shed, yet it appeared, by the writings of the partisans, that a considerable number of understandings were greatly injured. Those who supported the Pope's cause insisted, that the temporal power of Princes is subordinate to his; that he has a right to deprive them of their dominions, and release their subjects from their oaths of fidelity, as often as this shall be for the glory of God, and for the good of the Church; of which nobody could be so good a judge as the Pope, since all the world knew he was infallible; that ecclesiastics were not subjected to the civil power; that an ecclesiastical court, or the Pope, only, had authority over that body of men; and no-
 thing

thing could be more abominable, than to continue a prosecution against a prisoner, whatever his crimes might be, after the Father of the church, who had the undoubted power of absolving sinners, had interfered in his favour.

The Senate, in their answers, acknowledged, that the Pope was supreme head of the Church, and that, in all subjects of religious belief, his power was unbounded; for which reason they remained implicit and submissive believers; that they were far from disputing the infallibility of his Holiness in ecclesiastical matters, particularly within his own dominions; but, with regard to the government of their subjects, they would certainly take the whole trouble of that on themselves, and would administer as impartial justice to Ecclesiastics, as to those of other professions. They imagined also, that they were competent judges when, and for what purposes, they ought to levy money upon their own

O 4 subjects,

subjects, and whether it would be necessary to build any new churches in Venice, or not. Finally, they flattered themselves, that the prosecuting a murderer was no way inconsistent with the glory of God.

The greater number of the Princes of Christendom seemed to think the Senate were in the right. The Pope was disappointed in his expectations ; and finding himself unsupported, was glad to shelter his pride under the mediation of Henry the Fourth of France, who endeavoured to give his Holiness's defeat the appearance of victory.

LETTER XVII.

Venice.

THE year 1618 is distinguished in the annals of Venice, by a conspiracy of a more formidable nature than any hitherto mentioned. The design of other conspiracies was a change in the form of government, or, at most, the destruction of some particular class of men in power ; but the present plot had for its object the total annihilation of the Venetian republic. I speak of the conspiracy formed by the Marquis of Bedmar, ambassador from the Court of Spain, in conjunction with the Duke of Ossono, and the Spanish governor of the Milanese.

The interesting manner in which this dark design has been described by the Abbé St. Real, has made it more universally known than any other part of the

Venetian story. This writer is accused of having ornamented his account with some fanciful circumstances, an objection often enviously urged against some of the most agreeable writers, by authors whom nature has guarded from the possibility of committing such an error; men, whose truths are less interesting than fictions, and whose fictions are as dull as the most insipid truths. Does any reader believe that the speeches of the Generals before a battle, as recorded by Livy, were actually pronounced in the terms of that author? Or, can any one wish they were expunged from his history? Abbé St. Real has also put speeches into the mouths of the conspirators, and has embellished, without materially altering, the real circumstances of the story. For my own part, I feel a degree of gratitude to every person who has entertained me; and while my passions are agreeably agitated with St. Real's lively history, I cannot bear that a phlegmatic fellow should interrupt my enjoyment;

and, because of a few embellishments, declare, with an affected air of wisdom, that the whole is an idle romance.

The discovery of this plot, and the impressions of jealousy and terror which it left on the minds of the inhabitants of Venice, probably first suggested a plan of a more wicked nature than any of the conspiracies we have hitherto mentioned, and which was actually put in execution.

A set of villains combined together to accuse some of the nobility of treasonable practices, merely for the sake of the rewards bestowed upon informers. This horrid crime may be expected in all Governments where spies and informers are encouraged; it certainly occurs frequently at Venice; sometimes, no doubt, without being detected, and sometimes it is detected, without being publicly punished, for fear of discouraging the business of information: but on the discovery of the present combination, all Venice was struck with such horror,

horror, that the Senate thought proper to publish every circumstance.

A certain number of those miscreants acted the part of accusers; the others, being seized by the information of their accomplices, appeared as witnesses.

A noble Venetian, of a respectable character, and advanced in years, of the name of Foscarini, fell a victim to this horrid cabal; and Venice beheld with astonishment and sorrow, one of her most respectable citizens accused, condemned, and executed as a traitor.

At length, accusations followed each other so close, that they created suspicions in the minds of the Judges. The informers themselves were seized, and examined separately, and the whole dreadful scheme became manifest. These wretches suffered the punishment due to such complicated villany; the honour of Foscarini was re-instated, and every possible compensation

sation made to his injured family. An instance like this, of the despotic precipitancy of the Inquisitors, more than counterbalances all the benefit which the State ever receives from them, or the odious race of informers they encourage.

If the trial of the unfortunate Foscarini had been *open*, or *public*, and not in secret, according to the form of the Inquisitor's Court; and if he had been allowed to call exculpatory evidence, and assisted by those friends who knew all his actions, the falsehood and villany of these accusers would probably have been discovered, and his life saved.

In the year 1645, the Turks made an unexpected and sudden descent on the island of Candia. The Senate of Venice did not display their usual vigilance on this occasion. They had seen the immense warlike preparations going forward, and yet allowed themselves to be amused by the Grand Seignior's declaring war against
Malta,

Malta, and pretending that the armament was intended against that island. The troops landed without opposition, and the town of Canéa was taken after an obstinate defence.

This news being brought to Venice, excited an universal indignation against the Turks; and the Senate resolved to defend, to the utmost, this valuable part of the empire. Extraordinary ways and means of raising money were fallen upon: among others, it was proposed to sell the rank of nobility. Four citizens offered one hundred thousand ducats each for this honour; and, notwithstanding some opposition, this measure was at last carried. Eighty families were admitted into the Grand Council, and to the honour and privileges of the nobility. What an idea does this give of the wealth of the inhabitants of Venice?

The siege of Candia, the capital of the island of that name, is, in some respects, more memorable than that of any town,
which

which history, or even which poetry, has recorded. It lasted twenty-four years. The amazing efforts made by the republic of Venice astonished all Europe; their courage interested the gallant spirits of every nation: volunteers from every country came to Candia, to exercise their valour, to acquire knowledge in the military art, and assist a brave people whom they admired. The Duke of Beaufort, so much the darling of the Parisian populace during the war of the Fronde, was killed here, with many more gallant French officers.

During this famous siege, the Venetians gained many important victories over the Turkish fleets. Sometimes they were driven from the walls of Candia, and the Turkish garrison of Canéa was even besieged by the Venetian fleets. The slaughter made of the Turkish armies is without example; but new armies were soon found to supply their place, by a Government which boasts such populous dominions,

dominions, and which has despotic authority over its subjects.

Mahomet the Fourth, impatient at the length of this siege, came to Negropont, that he might have more frequent opportunities of hearing from the Vizier, who carried on the siege. An officer sent with dispatches, was directed by the Vizier, to explain to Mahomet the manner in which he made his approaches, and to assure him that he would take all possible care to save the lives of the soldiers. The humane Emperor answered, That he had sent the Vizier to take the place, and not to spare the lives of soldiers; and he was on the point of ordering the head of the officer who brought this message, to be cut off, merely to quicken the Vizier in his operations, and to shew him how little he valued the lives of men.

In spite of the Vizier's boasted parsimony, this war is said to have cost the lives of two hundred thousand Turks. Candia capitulated

capitulated in the year 1668: the conditions on this occasion were honourably fulfilled. Morfini, the Venetian General, after displaying prodigies of valour and capacity, marched out of the rubbish of this well-disputed city, with the honours of war.

The expence of such a tedious war greatly exhausted the resources of Venice, which could not now repair them so quickly as formerly, when she enjoyed the rich monopoly of the Asiatic trade; the discovery of the Cape of Good Hope having long since opened that valuable commerce to the Portuguese and other nations.

This republic remained in a state of tranquillity, endeavouring, by the arts of peace, and cultivation of that share of commerce which she still retained, to fill her empty exchequer, till she was drawn into a new war, in the year 1683, by the influence of the Ottoman Court. The Venetians had for some time endeavoured, by

negociation, and many conciliatory representations, to accommodate matters with the Turks ; and though the haughty conduct of her enemies afforded small hopes of success, yet such was her aversion to war on the present occasion, that she still balanced, whether to bear those insults, or repel them by arms ; when she was brought to decision by an event which gave the greatest joy to Venice, and astonished all Europe. This was the great victory gained over the Turkish army before the walls of Vienna, by Sobieski, King of Poland.

In this new war, their late General Morfini again had the command of the fleets and armies of the republic, and sustained the great reputation he had acquired in Candia. He conquered the Morea, which was ceded formally to Venice, with some other acquisition, at the peace of Carlowitz, in the last year of the last century.

During

During the war of the succession, the State of Venice observed a strict neutrality. They considered that dispute as unconnected with their interests, taking care, however, to keep on foot an army on their frontiers in Italy, of sufficient force to make them respected by the contending Powers. But, soon after the peace of Utrecht, the Venetians were again attacked by their old enemies the Turks; who, beholding the great European Powers exhausted by their late efforts, and unable to assist the republic, thought this the favourable moment for recovering the Morea, which had been so lately ravished from them. The Turks obtained their object, and at the peace of Passarowitz, which terminated this unsuccessful war, the Venetian State yielded up the Morea; the Grand Seignior, on his part, restoring to them the small islands of Cerigo and Cerigotto, with some places which his troops had taken during the course of the war in Dalmatia. Those, with the islands of

Corfou, Santa Maura, Zante, and Cephalonia, the remains of their dominions in the Levant, they have since fortified, at a great expence, as their only barriers against the Turk.

Since this period no essential alteration has taken place in the Venetian government, nor has there been any essential increase, or diminution, in the extent of their dominions. They have little to fear at present from the Turks, whose attention is sufficiently occupied by a more formidable enemy than the republic and the House of Austria united. Besides, if the Turks were more disengaged, as they have now stripped the republic of Cyprus, Candia, and their possessions in Greece, what remains in the Levant is hardly worth their attention.

The declension of Venice did not, like that of Rome, proceed from the increase of luxury, or the revolt of their own armies in the distant Colonies, or from
civil

civil wars of any kind. Venice has dwindled in power and importance, from causes which could not be foreseen; or guarded against by human prudence, although they had been foreseen. How could this republic have prevented the discovery of a passage to Asia by the Cape of Good Hope? or hinder other nations from being inspired with a spirit of enterprise, industry, and commerce? In their present situation there is little probability of their attempting new conquests; happy if they are allowed to remain in the quiet possession of what they have. Venice has a most formidable neighbour in the Emperor, whose dominions border on those of this republic on all sides. The independency of the republic entirely depends on his moderation; or, in case he should lose that virtue, on the protection of some of the great Powers of Europe.

I have now finished the sketch I proposed, of the Venetian government, with

P 3 which

which I could not help intermingling many of the principal historical events; indeed I enlarged on these, after you informed me, that you intended to give your young friend copies of my letters on this subject, before he begins his tour. I wish they were more perfect on his account; they will, at least, prevent his being in the situation of some travellers I have met with, who, after remaining here for many months, knew no more of the ancient or modern state of Venice, than that the inhabitants went about in boats instead of coaches, and, generally speaking, wore masks.

LETTER XVIII.

Venice.

HAVING travelled with you through the splendid æras of the Venetian story, and presented their statesmen and heroes to your view, let us now return to the present race, in whose life and conversation, I forewarn you, there is nothing heroic. The truth is, that in every country, as well as Venice, we can only *read* of heroes; they are seldom to be *seen*: for this plain reason, that while they are to be seen we do not think them heroes. The historian dwells upon what is vast and extraordinary; what is common and trivial finds no place in his records. When we hear the names of Epaminondas, Themistocles, Camillus, Scipio, and other great men of Greece and Rome, we think of their great actions, we know nothing else about them;—

but when we see the worthies of our own times, we unfortunately recollect their whole history. The citizens of Athens and Rome, who lived in the days of the heroes above mentioned, very probably had not the same admiration of them that we have; and our posterity, some eight or ten centuries hence, will, it is to be hoped, have a higher veneration for the great men of the present age, than their intimate acquaintance are known to have, or than those can be supposed to form, who daily behold them lounging in gaming-houses. All this, you perceive, is little more than a commentary on the old observation, That no man is a hero to his Valet de Chambre. The number of playhouses in Venice is very extraordinary, considering the size of the town, which is not thought to contain above one hundred and fifty thousand inhabitants, yet there are eight or nine theatres here, including the opera-houses. You pay a trifle at the door for admittance; this entitles you to go into the pit, where

where you may look about, and determine what part of the house you will sit in. There are rows of chairs placed in the front of the pit, next the orchestra; the seats of these chairs are folded to their backs, and fastened by a lock. Those who choose to take them, pay a little more money to the door-keeper, who immediately unlocks the seat. Very decent-looking people occupy these chairs; but the back part of the pit is filled with footmen and gondoleers, in their common working clothes. The nobility, and better sort of citizens, have boxes retained for the year; but there are always a sufficient number to be let to strangers: the price of those varies every night, according to the season of the year, and the piece acted.

A Venetian playhouse has a dismal appearance in the eyes of people accustomed to the brilliancy of those of London. Many of the boxes are so dark, that the faces of the company in them can hardly be

be distinguished at a little distance, even when they do not wear masks. The stage, however, is well illuminated, so that the people in the boxes can see, perfectly well, every thing that is transacted there; and when they choose to be seen themselves, they order lights into their boxes. Between the acts you sometimes see ladies walking about, with their Cavalieri Serventés, in the back part of the pit, when it is not crowded. As they are masked, they do not scruple to reconnoitre the company, with their spying-glasses, from this place; when the play begins, they return to their boxes. This continual moving about from box to box, and between the boxes and the pit, must create some confusion, and, no doubt, is disagreeable to those who attend merely on account of the piece. There must, however, be found some *douceur* in the midst of all this obscurity and confusion, which, in the opinion of the majority of the audience, overbalances these obvious inconveniences.

The music of the opera here is reckoned as fine as in any town in Italy; and, at any rate, is far superior to the praise of so very poor a judge as I am. The dramatic and poetical parts of those pieces are little regarded: the poet is allowed to indulge himself in as many anachronisms, and other inconsistencies, as he pleases. Provided the music receives the approbation of the critic's ear, his judgment is not offended with any absurdities in the other parts of the composition. The celebrated Metastasio has disdained to avail himself of this indulgence in his operas, which are fine dramatic compositions. He has preserved the alliance which ought always to subsist between sense and music.

But as for the music of the serious operas, it is, in general, infinitely too fine for my ear; to my shame I must confess, that it requires a considerable effort for me to sit till the end.

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It is surely happy for a man to have a real sensibility for fine music; because he has, by that means, one source of enjoyment more, than those whose auditory nerves are less delicately strung. It is, however, equally absurd and silly to affect an excessive delight in things which nature has not framed us to enjoy; yet how many of our acquaintance, accused of this folly, have we seen doing painful penance at the Hay-market; and, in the midst of unsuppressible yawnings, calling out, Charming! exquisite! bravissimo, &c.

It is amazing what pains some people take to render themselves ridiculous; and it is a matter of real curiosity to observe, in what various shapes the little despicable spirit of affectation shews itself among mankind.

I remember a very honest gentleman, who understood little or nothing of French; but having picked up a few phrases,

phrases, he brought them forward on every occasion, and affected, among his neighbours in the country, the most perfect knowledge, and highest admiration, of that language. When any body, in compliance with his taste, uttered a sentence in that tongue, though my good friend did not understand a syllable of it, yet he never failed to nod and smile to the speaker with the most knowing air imaginable. The parson of the parish, at a country dinner, once addressed him in these emphatic words: *Monsieur, je trouve ce plum-pudding extrêmement bon!* which happening not to be in my friend's collection of phrases, he did not comprehend. He nodded and smiled to the clergyman, however, in his usual intelligent manner; but a person who sat near him, being struck with the sagacious and important tone in which the observation had been delivered, begged of my friend to explain it in English:—on which, after some hesitation, he declared, that the turn of the expression was so genteel,

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teel, and so exquisitely adapted to the French idiom, that it could not be rendered into English, without losing a great deal of the original beauty of the sentiment.

At the comic opera I have sometimes seen action alone excite the highest applause, independent of either the poetry or the music. I saw a Duo performed by an old man and a young woman, supposed to be his daughter, in such an humorous manner, as drew an universal *encora* from the spectators. The merit of the musical part of the composition, I was told, was but very moderate, and as for the sentiment you shall judge.

The father informs his daughter, in a song, that he has found an excellent match for her; who, besides being rich, and very prudent, and not too young, was over and above a particular friend of his own, and in person and disposition, much such a man as himself; he concludes, by telling her, that the ceremony will be performed

next

next day. She thanks him, in the gayest air possible, for his obliging intentions, adding, that she should have been glad to have shewn her implicit obedience to his commands, provided there had been any chance of the man's being to her taste; but as, from the account he had given, there could be none, she declares she will not marry him next day, and adds, with a *very long* quaver, that if she were to live to *eternity* she should continue of the same opinion. The father, in a violent rage, tells her, that instead of to-morrow, the marriage should take place that very day; to which she replies, Non: he rejoins Si; she, Non, non; he, Si, si; the daughter, Non, non, non; the Father, Si, si, si; and so the singing continues for five or six minutes. You perceive there is nothing marvellously witty in this; and for a daughter to be of a different opinion from her father, in the choice of a husband, is not a very new dramatic incident. Well, I told you the Duo was encored—
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they immediately performed it a second time, and with more humour than the first. The whole house vociferated for it again ; and it was sung a third time in a manner equally pleasant, and yet perfectly different from any of the former two.

I thought the house would have been brought down about our ears, so extravagant were the testimonies of approbation.

The two actors were obliged to appear again, and sing this Duo a fourth time ; which they executed in a style so new, so natural, and so exquisitely droll, that the audience now thought there had been something deficient in all their former performances, and that they had hit on the true comic only this last time.

Some people began to call for it again ; but the old man, now quite exhausted, begged for mercy ; on which the point was given up. I never before had any idea that such strong comic powers could
have

have been displayed in the singing of a song.

The dancing is an essential part of the entertainment at the opera here, as well as at London. There is certainly a much greater proportion of mankind deaf to the delights of music, than blind to the beauties of fine dancing. During the singing, and recitativo part of the performance, the singers are often allowed to warble for a considerable time, without any body's minding them; but the moment the ballet begins, private conversation, though pretty universal before, is immediately at an end, and the eyes of all the spectators are fixed on the stage. This, to be sure, has been always the case in London, and, in spite of the pains some people take to conceal it, we all know the reason; but I own I did not expect to find the same preference of dancing to music in Italy.

After seeing the dancing at the French opera, and coming so lately from Vienna,

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where we had seen some of Noverre's charming ballets very well executed, we could have no high admiration of those performed here, though there are at present some dancers highly esteemed, who perform every night.

The Italians, I am informed, have a greater relish for agility and high jumping in their dancers, than for graceful movements.

It is extraordinary that they do not vary the ballets oftener. They give the same every night during the run of the opera. There is a propriety in continuing the same opera for a considerable time; because music is often better relished after it becomes a little familiar to the ear, than at first; but a ballet might be changed, without much difficulty, every night.

LETTER XIX.

Venice.

MANY people are surpris'd, that, in a Government so very jealous of its power as that of Venice, there is no military establishment within the city to support the executive power, and repress any popular commotion. For my own part, I am strongly of opinion, that it proceeds from this very jealousy in government, that there is no military garrison here.

An arbitrary Prince is fond of a standing army, and loves to be always surrounded by guards; because he, being the permanent fountain of honours and promotion, the army will naturally be much attached to him, and become, on all occasions, the blind instruments of his pleasure; but at Venice, there is no visible permanent object,

to which the army can attach itself. The Doge would not be allowed the command of the garrison, if there was one. The three State Inquisitors are continually changing; and before one set could gain the affections of the soldiers, another would be chosen; so that Government could not be supported, but much more probably would be overturned, by a numerous garrison being established in Venice; for it might perhaps not be difficult for a few of the rich and powerful nobles to corrupt the garrison, and gain over the commander to any ambitious plan of their own, for the destruction of the constitution.

But although there is no formal garrison in a military uniform, yet there is a real effective force sufficient to suppress any popular commotion, at the command of the Senate, and Council of Ten. This force, besides the Sbirri, consists of a great number of stout fellows, who, without any distinguishing dress, are kept in the pay of Government,

Government, and are at the command of that Council. There is also the whole body of the gondoleers, the most hardy and daring of the common Venetians. This body of men are greatly attached to the nobility, from whom they have most of their employment, and with whom they acquire a certain degree of familiarity, by passing great part of their time, shut up in boats, in their company, and by being privy to many of their love intrigues. Great numbers of these gondoleers are in the service of particular nobles; and there is no doubt, that, in case of any popular insurrection, the whole would take the side of the nobility and Senate, against the people. In short, they may be considered as a kind of standing militia, ready to rise as soon as the Government requires their services.

Lastly, there is the Grand Council itself, which, in case of any violent commotion of the citizens and populace, could be

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armed

armed directly, from the small arsenal within the Ducal palace, and would prove a very formidable force against an unarmed multitude; for the laws of Venice forbid, under pain of death, any citizen to carry fire-arms; a law which is very exactly executed by the State Inquisitors.

By those means the executive power of Government is as irresistible at Venice, as at Peterburgh or Constantinople, while there is a far less chance of the Government itself being overthrown here by the instruments of its own power; for, although a regular army, or garrison, might be corrupted by the address of an ambitious Doge, or by a combination of a few rich and popular nobles, in which case a revolution would take place at once; it is almost impossible to conceive, that all the different powers above mentioned could be engaged to act in favour of one man, or a small combination of men, without being detected by the vigilance of the Inquisitors,

Inquisitors, or the jealousy of those who were not in the conspiracy. And if we suppose a majority of the nobles inclinable to any change in the form of the Government, they have no occasion to carry on a secret plot ; they may come to the Council Chamber, and dictate whatever alterations they think proper.

LETTER XX.

Venice.

THERE is unquestionably much reflection, and great depth of thought, displayed in the formation of the political constitution of Venice; but I should admire it much more, if the Council of Ten, and State Inquisitors, had never formed any part of it. Their institution, in my opinion, destroys the effect of all the rest. Like those misers who actually starve themselves, by endeavouring to avoid the inconveniences of poverty, the Venetians, in whatever manner it is brought about, actually support a despotic tribunal, under the pretext of keeping out despotism. In some respects this system is worse than the fixed and permanent tyranny of one person; for that person's character and maxims would be known, and, by endeavouring to conform themselves to his way of

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of thinking, people might have some chance of living unmolested; but according to this plan, they have a free-thinker for their tyrant to-day, and a bigot to-morrow. One year a set of Inquisitors, who consider certain parts of conduct as innocent, which, in the sight of their successors, may appear State crimes; men do not know what they have to depend upon. An universal jealousy must prevail, and precautions will be used to avoid the suspicions of Government, unknown in any other country. Accordingly we find, that the noble Venetians are afraid of having any intercourse with foreign ambassadors, or with foreigners of any kind; they are even cautious of visiting at each other's houses, and hardly ever have meetings together, except at the courts, or on the Broglio. The boasted secrecy of their public councils proceeds, in all probability, from the same principle of fear. If all conversation on public affairs were forbid, under pain of death, and if the members of the British Parliament

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ment were liable to be seized in the night-time by general warrants, and hanged at Tyburn, or drowned in the Thames, at the pleasure of the Secretaries of State, I dare swear the world would know as little of what passes in either House of Parliament, as they do of what is transacted in the Senate of Venice.

It is not safe for a noble Venetian to acquire, in a high degree, the love and confidence of the common people. This excites the jealousy of the Inquisitors, and proves a pretty certain means of excluding him from any of the high offices. A Government which displays so much distrust and suspicion where there is little or no ground, will not fail to shew marks of the same disposition where, in the general opinion, there is some reason to be circumspect. Ecclesiastics, of every denomination, are excluded, by the constitution of Venice, from a place in the Senate, or holding any civil office whatever; nor is it permitted them,

them, directly or indirectly, to intermeddle in State affairs. In many instances, they are deprived of that kind of influence which, even in Protestant countries, is allowed to the clergy. The Patriarch of Venice has not the disposal of the offices belonging to St. Mark's church : all the Deans are named by the Doge and Senate.

Though it is forbid to the nobility, and to the clergy, to hold any conversation with strangers upon politics, or affairs of State; yet it is remarked, the gondoleers are exceeding ready to talk upon these, or any other subjects, with all who give them the smallest encouragement. Those who are not in the immediate service of any particular nobleman, are often retained by Government, like the Valets de-place at Paris, as spies upon strangers. It is said, that while those fellows row their gondolas, in seeming inattention to the conversation, they are taking notice of every thing which is said, that they may report it

it to their employers, when they imagine it any way concerns the Government. If this is true, those are to be pitied who are obliged to listen to all the stuff that such politicians may be supposed to relate. As soon as a stranger arrives, the gondoleers who brought him to Venice immediately repair to a certain office, and give information where they took him up, to what house they conducted him, and of any other particulars they may have picked up. All those precautions recalled to my memory the garrison of Darmstadt, of which I gave you an account in a letter from that place, where the strictest duty is kept up by day and night, in winter as well as summer, and every precaution used, as if an enemy were at the gates; though no mortal has the smallest design against the place, and though it is perfectly understood by all the inhabitants, that if an army was in reality to come with hostile intentions, the town could not hold out a week. In the same manner, I cannot help thinking,

thinking, that all this jealousy and distrust, those numerous engines set a going, and all this complicated system for the discovery of plots, and the defence of the constitution of this republic, serves only to harass their own subjects. Their constitution is certainly in no such danger as to require such an apparatus of machines to defend it, unless, indeed, the Emperor were to form a plot against it; and, in that case, it is much to be feared, that the spies, gondoleers, lions mouths, and State Inquisitors, would hardly prevent its success.

Exclusive of this State Inquisition, my abhorrence to which, I perceive, leads me sometimes away from my purpose, all ranks of people here might be exceeding happy. The business of the various courts, and the great number of offices in the State, form a constant employment for the nobles, and furnish them with proper objects to excite industry and ambition. The citizens form a respectable body in the State;

State; and, though they are excluded from the Senate, they may hold some very lucrative and important offices. By applying to the arts and sciences, which are encouraged at Venice, they have a fair chance of living agreeably, and laying up a competency for their families. Private property is no where better secured than at Venice; and notwithstanding she no longer enjoys the trade of Asia without competitors, yet her commerce is still considerable, and many individuals acquire great wealth by trade. The manufactories established here employ all the industrious poor, and prevent that squalid beggary, that pilfering and robbery, one or other, or all of which, prevail in most other countries of Europe.

Their subjects on the Terra Firma, I am informed, are not at all oppressed; the Senate has found that mild treatment, and good usage, are the best policy, and more effectual than armies, in preventing revolts.

The Podestàs, therefore, are not allowed to abuse their power, by treating the people with severity or injustice. Those Governors know, that any complaints produced against them, will be scrutinized by the Senate very carefully. This prevents many abuses of power on their part, and makes the neighbouring provinces which formerly belonged to this State, regret the chance of war which ravished them from the equitable government of their ancient masters.

LETTER XXI.

Venice.

THOUGH the Venetian Government is still under the influence of jealousy, that gloomy Dæmon is now entirely banished from the bosoms of individuals. Instead of the confinement in which women were formerly kept at Venice, they now enjoy a degree of freedom unknown even at Paris. Of the two extremes, the present, without doubt, is the preferable.

The husbands seem at last convinced, that the chastity of their wives is safest under their own guardianship, and that when a woman thinks her honour not worth her own regard, it is still more unworthy of his. This advantage, with many others, must arise from the present system; that when a husband believes that his wife has faithfully adhered to her con-

jugal engagement, he has the additional satisfaction of knowing, that she acts from a love to him, or some honourable motive; whereas, formerly, a Venetian husband could not be certain that he was not obliged, for his wife's chastity, to iron bars, bolts, and padlocks.

Could any man imagine, that a woman, whose chastity was preserved by such means only, was, in fact, more respectable than a common prostitute? The old plan of distrust and confinement, without even securing what was its object, must have had a strong tendency to debase the minds of both the husband and the wife; for what man, whose mind was not perfectly abject, could have pleasure in the society of a wife, who, to his own conviction, languished to be in the arms of another man? Of all the humble employments that ever the wretched sons of Adam submitted to, surely that of watching a wife from morning to night, and all night too, is the most per-

fectly humiliating. Such ungenerous distrust must also have had the worst effect on the minds of the women; made them view their gaolers with disgust and horror; and we ought not to be much surpris'd if some preferred the common gondoleers of the lakes, and the vagrants of the streets, to such husbands. Along with jealousy, *poison* and the *filetto* have been banished from Venetian gallantry, and the innocent mask is substituted in their places. According to the best information I have received, this same mask is a much more innocent matter than is generally imagined. In general it is not intended to conceal the person who wears it, but only used as an apology for his not being in full dress. With a mask stuck in the hat, and a kind of black mantle, trimmed with lace of the same colour, over the shoulders, a man is sufficiently dressed for any assembly at Venice.

Those who walk the streets, or go to the playhouses with masks actually cover-

ing their faces, are either engaged in some love intrigue, or would have the spectators think so; for this is a piece of affectation which prevails here, as well as elsewhere; and I have been assured, by those who have resided many years at Venice, that *refined* gentlemen, who are fond of the reputation, though they shrink from the catastrophe, of an intrigue, are no uncommon characters here; and I believe it the more readily, because I daily see many feeble gentlemen tottering about in masks, for whom a basin of warm restorative soup seems more expedient than the most beautiful woman in Venice.

One evening at St. Mark's Place, when a gentleman of my acquaintance was giving an account of this curious piece of affectation, he desired me to take notice of a Venetian nobleman of his acquaintance, who, with an air of mystery, was conducting a female mask into his Caffino. My acquaintance knew him perfectly well,

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and

and assured me, he was the most innocent creature with women he had ever been acquainted with. When this gallant person perceived that we were looking at him, his mask fell to the ground, as if by accident; and after we had got a complete view of his countenance, he put it on with much hurry, and immediately rushed, with his partner, into the Caffino.

Fugit ad falices, sed se cupit ante videri.

You have heard, no doubt, of those little apartments, near St. Mark's Place, called Caffinos. They have the misfortune to labour under a very bad reputation; they are accused of being temples entirely consecrated to lawless love, and a thousand scandalous tales are told to strangers concerning them. Those tales are certainly not believed by the Venetians themselves, the proof of which is, that the Caffinos are allowed to exist; for I hold it perfectly absurd to imagine, that men would suffer their wives to enter such places, if they were not convinced

vinced that those stories were ill-founded ; nor can I believe, after all we have heard of the profligacy of Venetian manners, that women, even of indifferent reputations, would attend Cassinos in the open manner they do, if it were understood that more liberties were taken with them there than elsewhere.

The opening before St. Mark's church is the only place in Venice where a great number of people can assemble. It is the fashion to walk here a great part of the evening, to enjoy the music, and other amusements ; and although there are coffee-houses, and Venetian manners permit ladies, as well as gentlemen, to frequent them, yet it was natural for the noble and most wealthy to prefer little apartments of their own, where, without being exposed to intrusion, they may entertain a few friends in a more easy and unceremonious manner than they could do at their palaces. Instead of going home to a

formal supper, and returning afterwards to this place of amusement, they order coffee, lemonade, fruit, and other refreshments, to the Cassino.

That those little apartments may be occasionally used for the purposes of intrigue, is not improbable; but that this is the ordinary and avowed purpose for which they are frequented is, of all things, the least credible.

Some writers who have described the manners of the Venetians, as more profligate than those of other nations, assert at the same time, that the Government encourages this profligacy, to relax and dissipate the minds of the people, and prevent their planning, or attempting, any thing against the constitution. Were this the case, it could not be denied, that the Venetian legislators display their patriotism in a very extraordinary manner, and have fallen upon as extraordinary means of rendering their people good subjects. They first erect a despotic court to
guard

guard the public liberty, and next they corrupt the morals of the people, to keep them from plotting against the State. This last piece of refinement, however, is no more than a conjecture of some theoretical politicians, who are apt to take facts for granted, without sufficient proof, and afterwards display their ingenuity in accounting for them. That the Venetians are more given to sensual pleasures than the inhabitants of London, Paris, or Berlin, I imagine will be difficult to prove; but as the State Inquisitors do not think proper, and the ecclesiastical are not allowed, to interfere in affairs of gallantry; as a great number of strangers assemble twice or thrice a year at Venice, merely for the sake of amusement; and, above all, as it is the custom to go about in masks, an idea prevails, that the manners are more licentious here than elsewhere. I have had occasion to observe, that this custom of wearing a mask, by conveying the ideas of concealment and intrigue, has contributed

greatly to give some people an impression of Venetian profligacy. But, for my own part, it is not a piece of white or black paper, with distorted features, that I suspect, having often found the most complete worthlessness concealed under a smooth smiling piece of human skin.

LETTER XXII.

Venice.

I AM very sensible, that it requires a longer residence at Venice, and better opportunities than I have had, to enable me to give a character of the Venetians. But were I to form an idea of them from what I have seen, I should paint them as a lively ingenious people, extravagantly fond of public amusements, with an uncommon relish for humour, and yet more attached to the real enjoyments of life, than to those which depend on ostentation, and proceed from vanity.

The common people of Venice display some qualities very rarely to be found in that sphere of life, being remarkably sober, obliging to strangers, and gentle in their intercourse with each other. The Venetians in general are tall and well made.

Though

Though equally robust, they are not so corpulent as the Germans. The latter also are of fair complexions, with light-grey or blue eyes ; whereas the Venetians are for the most part of a ruddy brown colour, with dark eyes. You meet in the streets of Venice many fine manly countenances, resembling those transmitted to us by the pencils of Paul Veronese and Titian. The women are of a fine stile of countenance, with expressive features, and a skin of a rich carnation. They dress their hair in a fanciful manner, which becomes them very much. They are of an easy address, and have no aversion to cultivating an acquaintance with those strangers, who are presented to them by their relations, or have been properly recommended,

Strangers are under less restraint here, in many particulars, than the native inhabitants. I have known some, who, after having tried most of the capitals of Europe,

Europe, have preferred to live at Venice, on account of the variety of amusements, the gentle manners of the inhabitants, and the perfect freedom allowed in every thing, except in blaming the measures of Government. I have already mentioned in what manner the Venetians are in danger of being treated who give themselves that liberty. When a stranger is so imprudent as to declaim against the form or the measures of Government, he will either receive a message to leave the territories of the State, or one of the Sbirri will be sent to accompany him to the Pope's or the Emperor's dominions,

The houses are thought inconvenient by many of the English; they are better calculated, however, for the climate of Italy, than if they were built according to the London model, which, I suppose, is the plan those critics approve. The floors are of a kind of red plaister, with a brilliant glossy surface, much more beautiful
than

than wood, and far preferable in case of fire, whose progress they are calculated to check.

The principal apartments are on the second floor. The Venetians seldom inhabit the first, which is often intirely filled with lumber: perhaps, they prefer the second, because it is farthest removed from the moisture of the lakes; or perhaps they prefer it, because it is better lighted, and more cheerful; or they may have some better reason for this preference than I am acquainted with, or can imagine. Though the inhabitants of Great Britain make use of the first floors for their chief apartments, this does not form a complete demonstration that the Venetians are in the wrong for preferring the second. When an acute sensible people universally follow one custom, in a mere matter of convenience, however absurd that custom may appear in the eyes of a stranger at first sight, it will generally be found, that
there

there is some real advantage in it, which compensates all the apparent inconveniences. Of this travellers, who do not hurry with too much rapidity through the countries they visit, are very sensible: for, after having had time to weigh every circumstance, they often see reason to approve what they had formerly condemned. I could illustrate this by many examples; but your own recollection must furnish you with so many, that any more would be superfluous. Custom and fashion have the greatest influence on our taste of beauty or excellence of every kind. What, from a variety of causes, has become the standard in one country, is sometimes just the contrary in another. The same thing that makes a low-brimmed hat appear genteel at one time, and ridiculous at another, has made a different species of versification be accounted the model of perfection in old Rome and modern Italy, at Paris, or at London. In matters of taste, particularly in dramatic poetry, the prejudices which
each

each particular nation acquires in favour of its own is difficult to be removed. People seldom obtain such a perfect knowledge of a foreign language and foreign manners, as to understand all the niceties of the one and the allusions to the other: of consequence, many things are insipid to them, for which a native may have a high relish.

The dialogues in rhyme of the French plays appear unnatural and absurd to Englishmen when they first attend the French theatre; yet those who have remained long in France, and acquired a more perfect knowledge of the language, assure us, that without rhyme the dignity of the Tragic Muse cannot be supported; and that, even in Comedy, they produce an additional elegance, which overbalances every objection. The French language being more studied and better understood by the English than our language is by the French nation, we find many of our
country-

countrymen who relish the beauties, and pay the just tribute of admiration to the genius of Corneille, while there is scarcely a single Frenchman to be found who has any idea of the merit of Shakespeare.

Without being justly accused of partiality, I may assert that, in this instance, the English display a fairness and liberality of sentiment superior to the French. The irregularities of Shakespeare's drama are obvious to every eye, and would, in the present age, be avoided by a poet not possessed of a hundredth part of his genius. His peculiar beauties, on the other hand, are of an excellence which has not, perhaps, been attained by any poet of any age or country; yet the French critics, from Voltaire down to the poorest scribbler in the literary journals, all stop at the former, declaim on the barbarous taste of the English nation, insist on the grotesque absurdity of the poet's imagination, and illustrate both by partial extracts of the
most

most exceptionable scenes of Shakespeare's plays.

When a whole people, with that degree of judgment which even the enemies of the British nation allow them to have, unite in the highest admiration of one man, and continue, for ages, to behold his pieces with unsated delight, it might occur to those Frenchmen, that there possibly was some excellence in the works of this poet, though they could not see it; and a very moderate share of candour might have taught them, that it would be more becoming to spare their ridicule, till they acquired a little more knowledge of the author against whom it is pointed.

An incident which occurred since my arrival at Venice, though founded on a prejudice much more excusable than the conduct of the critics above mentioned, has brought home to my conviction the rashness of those who form opinions, without
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the knowledge requisite to direct their judgment.

I had got, I don't know how, the most contemptuous opinion of the Italian drama. I had been told, there was not a tolerable actor at present in Italy, and I had been long taught to consider their comedy as the most despicable stuff in the world, which could not amuse, or even draw a smile from any person of taste, being quite destitute of true humour, full of ribaldry, and only proper for the meanest of the vulgar. Impressed with these sentiments, and eager to give his Grace a full demonstration of their justness, I accompanied the D— of H—— to the stage-box of one of the playhouses the very day of our arrival at Venice.

The piece was a comedy, and the most entertaining character in it was that of a man who stuttered. In this defect, and in the singular grimaces with which the actor

accompanied it, consisted a great part of the amusement.

Disgusted at such a pitiful substitution for wit and humour, I expressed a contempt for an audience which could be entertained by such buffoonery, and who could take pleasure in the exhibition of a natural infirmity.

While we inwardly indulged sentiments of self-approbation, on account of the refinement and superiority of our own taste, and supported the dignity of those sentiments by a disdainful gravity of countenance, the Stutterer was giving a piece of information to Harlequin which greatly interested him, and to which he listened with every mark of eagerness. This unfortunate speaker had just arrived at the most important part of his narrative, which was, to acquaint the impatient listener where his mistress was concealed, when he unluckily stumbled on a word of

fix

fix or seven syllables, which completely obstructed the progress of his narration. He attempted it again and again, but always without success. You may have observed that, though many other words would explain his meaning equally well, you may as soon make a Saint change his religion, as prevail on a Stutterer to accept of another word in place of that at which he has stumbled. He adheres to his first word to the last, and will sooner expire with it in his throat, than give it up for any other you may offer. Harlequin, on the present occasion, presented his friend with a dozen; but he rejected them all with disdain, and persisted in his unsuccessful attempts on that which had first come in his way. At length, making a desperate effort, when all the spectators were gaping in expectation of his safe delivery, the cruel word came up with its broad side foremost, and stuck directly across the unhappy man's wind-pipe. He gaped, and panted, and croaked; his face flushed,

and his eyes seemed ready to start from his head. Harlequin unbuttoned the Stutterer's waistcoat, and the neck of his shirt; he fanned his face with his cap, and held a bottle of hartshorn to his nose. At length, fearing his patient would expire, before he could give the desired intelligence, in a fit of despair he pitched his head full in the dying man's stomach, and the word bolted out of his mouth to the most distant part of the house.

This was performed in a manner so perfectly droll, and the humorous absurdity of the expedient came so unexpectedly upon me, that I immediately burst into a most excessive fit of laughter, in which I was accompanied by the D—, and by your young friend Jack, who was along with us; and our laughter continued in such loud, violent, and repeated fits, that the attention of the audience being turned from the stage to our box, occasioned a renewal of the mirth all over the playhouse with greater vociferation than at first.

When

When we returned to the inn, the D—
of H— asked me, If I were as much
convinced as ever, that a man must be
perfectly devoid of taste, who could con-
descend to laugh at an Italian comedy?

S §
young, lively, and strong, with
us; and our laughter continued in such
loud, violent, and repeated fits, that the
attention of the audience being turned from
the stage to our box, occasioned a rebuff
of the comedian over the playhouse wall.
exact vociferation than at first.
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LETTER XXIII.

Padua.

WE were detained at Venice several days longer than we intended, by excessive falls of rain, which rendered the road to Verona impassable. Relinquishing, therefore, the thoughts of visiting that city for the present, the D— determined to go to Ferrara by water. For this purpose I engaged two barks; in one of which the chaises, baggage, and some of the servants, proceeded directly to Ferrara, while we embarked in the other for Padua.

Having crossed the Lagune, we entered the Brenta, but could continue our route by that river no farther than the village of Doglio, where there is a bridge; but the waters were so much swelled by the late rains, that there was not room for our boat to pass below the arch. Quitting
the

the boat, therefore, till our return, we hired two open chaises, and continued our journey along the banks of the Brenta to Padua.

Both sides of this river display gay, luxuriant scenes of magnificence and fertility, being ornamented by a great variety of beautiful villas, the works of Palladio and his disciples. The verdure of the meadows and gardens here is not surpassed by that of England.

The Venetian nobility, I am told, live with less restraint, and entertain their friends with greater freedom, at their villas, than at their palaces in town. It is natural to suppose, that a Venetian must feel peculiar satisfaction when his affairs permit him to enjoy the exhilarating view of green fields, and to breathe the free air of the country,

As one who long in populous city pent,
Where houses thick, and sewers, annoy the air,
§ 4 Forth

Forth issuing on a summer's morn, to breathe
Among the pleasant villages and farms
Adjoin'd, from each thing met conceives delight.
The smell of grain, or tedded grass, or kine,
Or dairy ; each rural sight, each rural sound.

I confess, for my own part, I never felt
the beauty of those lines of Milton with
greater sensibility, than when I passed
through the charming country which is
watered by the Brenta, after having been
pent up in the terraqueous town of Venice.
As one reason which induced his Grace to
visit Padua at this time was, that he might
pay his duty to his R— H—— the D—
of G——, we waited on that prince
as soon as we had his permission. His
R— H—— has been here for some time
with his D——s. He was very ill at
Venice, and has been advised to remove to
this place for the benefit of the air. It is
with much satisfaction I add, that he is
now out of danger, a piece of intelligence
with which you will have it in your power
to

to give pleasure to many people in England.

No city in the world has less affinity with the country than Venice, and few can have more than Padua; for great part of the circuit within the walls is unbuilt, and the town in general so thinly inhabited, that grass is seen in many places in the interstices of the stones with which the streets are paved. The houses are built on porticoes, which, when the town was well inhabited, and in a flourishing condition, may have had a magnificent appearance; but, in its present state, they rather give it a greater air of melancholy and of gloom.

The Franciscan church, dedicated to St. Antonio, the great patron of this city, was the place we were first led to by the Cicerone of our inn. The body of this holy person is inclosed in a sarcophagus, under an altar in the middle of the chapel, and is said to emit a very agreeable and refreshing

refreshing flavour. Pious Catholics believe this to be the natural effluvia of the saint's body; while Heretics assert, that the perfume (for a perfume there certainly is) proceeds from certain balsams rubbed on the marble every morning, before the votaries come to pay their devotions. I never presume to give an opinion on contested points of this kind; but I may be allowed to say, that if this sweet odour really proceeds from the holy Franciscan, he emits a very different smell from any of the brethren of that order whom I ever had an opportunity of approaching.

The walls of this church are covered with votive offerings of ears, eyes, arms, legs, noses, and every part almost of the human body, in token of cures performed by this saint; for whatever part has been the seat of the disease, a representation of it is hung up in silver or gold, according to the gratitude and wealth of the patient.

At

At a small distance from this church is a place called the School of St. Antonio. Here many of the actions of the Saint are painted in fresco; some of them by Titian. Many miracles of a very extraordinary nature are here recorded. I observed one in particular, which, if often repeated, might endanger the peace of families. The Saint thought proper to loosen the tongue of a new-born child, and endue it with the faculty of speech; on which the infant, with an imprudence natural to its age, declared, in an audible voice, before a large company, who was its *real* father. The miracles attributed to this celebrated Saint greatly exceed in number those recorded by the Evangelists of our Saviour; and although it is not asserted, that St. Antonio has as yet raised himself from the dead, yet his admirers here record things of him which are almost equivalent. When an impious Turk had secretly placed fireworks under the chapel,

with

with an intention to blow it up, they affirm, that St. Antonio hallooed three times from his marble coffin, which terrified the infidel, and discovered the plot. This miracle is the more miraculous, as the Saint's tongue was cut out, and is actually preserved in a chrystal vessel, and shewn as a precious relic to all who have a curiosity to see it. I started this as a difficulty which seemed to bear a little against the authenticity of the miracle; and the ingenious person to whom the objection was made, seemed at first somewhat nonplussed; but, after recollecting himself, he observed, that this, which at first seemed an objection, was really a confirmation of the fact; for the Saint was not said to have spoken, but only to have hallooed, which a man can do without a tongue; but if his tongue had not been cut out, added he, there is no reason to doubt that the Saint would have revealed the Turkish plot in plain articulate language.

From

From the Tower of the Franciscan church we had a very distinct view of the beautiful country which surrounds Padua. All the objects, at a little distance, seemed delightful and flourishing; but every thing under our eyes indicated wretchedness and decay.

LETTER XXIV.

Padua.

THE next church, in point of rank, but far superior in point of architecture, is that of St. Justina, built from a design of Palladio, and reckoned, by some people, one of the most elegant he ever gave. St. Justina is said to have suffered martyrdom where the church is built, which was the reason of erecting it on that particular spot. It would have been fortunate for the pictures in this church if the Saint had suffered on a piece of drier ground, for they seem considerably injured by the damp which surround the place where it now stands. There is a wide area in front of the church, called the Prato della Valle, where booths and shops are erected for all kinds of merchandise during the fairs. Part of this, which is never allowed to be profaned by the buyers and sellers,

sellers, is called Campo Santo, because there a great number of Christian martyrs are said to have been put to death.

St. Justina's church is adorned with many altars, embellished with sculpture. The pavement is remarkably rich, being a kind of Mosaic work, of marble of various colours. Many other precious materials are wrought as ornaments to this church, but there is one species of jewels in which it abounds, more than, perhaps, any church in Christendom; which is, the bones of martyrs. They have here a whole well full, belonging to those who were executed in the Prato della Valle; and what is of still greater value, the Benedictines, to whom this church belongs, assert, that they are also in possession of the bodies of the two evangelists St. Matthew and St. Luke. The Franciscans belonging to a convent at Venice dispute the second of those two great prizes, and declare, that *they* are possessed of the true body of St. Luke,

Luke, this in St. Justina's church being only an imposture. The matter was referred to the Pope, who gave a decision in favour of one of the bodies; but this does not prevent the proprietors of the other from still persisting in their original claim, so that there is no likelihood of the dispute being finally determined till the day of judgment.

The hall of the Town-house of Padua is one of the largest I ever saw. From the best guess I could make, after stepping it, I should think it about three hundred English feet long, by one hundred in breadth: the emblematic and astrological paintings, by Giotto, are much decayed. This immense hall is on the second floor, and is ornamented with the busts and statues of some eminent persons. The Cenotaph of Livy, the historian, who was a native of Padua, is erected here. The University, formerly so celebrated, is now, like every thing else in this city, on the decline; the Theatre

anatomy could contain five or six hundred students, but the voice of the Professor is like that of him who crieth in the wilderness. The licentious spirit of the students, which formerly was carried such unwarrantable lengths, and made it dangerous to walk in the streets of this city at night, is now entirely extinct: it has gradually declined with the numbers of the students. Whether the ardour for literature, for which the students of this university were distinguished, has abated in the same proportion, I cannot determine; but I am informed, that by far the greater number of the young men who now attend the university, are designed for the priesthood, and apply to the study of divinity as a science, for comprehending and preaching the mysterious parts of which, a very small portion of learning has been observed to succeed better, than a great deal.

There is a cloth manufactory in this city; and I was told, that the inhabitants

of Venice, not excepting the nobles, wear no other cloth than what is made here. This particular manufactory, it may therefore be supposed, succeeds very well; but the excessive number of beggars with which this place swarms, is a strong proof that trade and manufactures in general are by no means in a flourishing condition. In the course of my life I never saw such a number of beggars at one time, as attacked us at the church of St. Antonio. The D— of H—— fell into a mistake, analogous to that of Sable in the Funeral, who complains, that the more money he gave his mourners to look sad, the merrier they looked. His G— gave all he had in his pocket to the clamorous multitude which surrounded him, on condition that they would hold their tongues, and leave us; on which they became more numerous, and more vociferous than before. Strangers who visit Padua will do well, therefore, to observe the gospel injunction, and perform their charities in secret.

LETTER XXV.

The Po.

IN my letter from Padua I neglected to mention her high pretensions to antiquity : she claims Antenor, the Trojan, as her founder ; and this claim is supported by classical authority. In the first book of the *Æneid*, Venus complains to Jupiter, that her son *Æneas* is still a vagabond on the seas, while Antenor has been permitted to establish himself, and build a city in Italy.

Hic tamen ille urbem Patavi sedesque locavit.

Lucan also, in his *Pharsalia*, describing the augur who read in the skies the events of that decisive day, alludes to the same story of Antenor ;

*Euganeo, si vera fides memorantibus, augur
Colle sedens, Aponus terris ubi fumifer exit,*

Atque Antenorei dispergitur unda Timavi
Venit summa dies, geritur res maxima dixit;
Impia concurrunt Pompeii et Cæsaris arma.

Some modern critics have asserted, that the two poets have been guilty of a geographical mistake, as the river Timavus empties itself into the Adriatic Gulph near Trieste, about a hundred miles from Padua; and that the Aponus is near Padua, and about the same distance from Timavus.

If, therefore, Antenor built a city where the river Timavus rushes into the sea, that city must have been situated at a great distance from where Padua now stands. The Paduan antiquarians, therefore, accuse Virgil, without scruple, of this blunder, that they may retain the Trojan Prince as their ancestor. But those who have more regard for the character of Virgil than the antiquity of Padua, insist upon it, that the poet was in the right, and that the city which Antenor built, was upon the Banks of Timavus, and exactly a hundred miles
from

from modern Padua. As for Lucan, he is left in the lurch by both sides, though, in my poor opinion, we may naturally suppose, that one of the streams which run into Timavus was, at the time he wrote, called Aponus, which vindicates the poet, without weakening the relation between the Paduans and Antenor.

The inhabitants of Padua themselves seem to have been a little afraid of trusting their claim entirely to classical authority; for an old sarcophagus having been dug up in the year 1283, with an unintelligible inscription upon it, this was declared to be the tomb of Antenor, and was placed in one of the streets, and surrounded with a ballustrade; and, *to put the matter out of doubt*, a Latin inscription assures the reader, that it contains the body of the renowned Antenor, who, having escaped from Troy, had drove the Euganei out of the country, and built this identical city of Padua.

Though

Though the Paduans find that there are people ill-natured enough to assert, that this sarcophagus does not contain the bones of the illustrious Trojan, yet they can defy the malice of those cavillers to prove, that they belong to any other person; upon which negative proof, joined to what has been mentioned above, they rest the merit of their pretensions.

After remaining a few days at Padua, we returned to the village of Doglio, where we had left our vessel. We stopped, and visited some of the villas on the banks of the Brenta. The apartments are gay and spacious, and must be delightful in summer; but none of the Italian houses seem calculated for the winter, which, nevertheless, I am informed, is sometimes as severe in this country as in England.

Having embarked in our little vessel, we soon entered a canal, of about twenty-two Italian miles in length, which communicates with the Po, and we were drawn
along,

along, at a pretty good rate, by two horses. We passed last night in the vessel, as we shall this ; for there is no probability of our reaching Ferrara till to-morrow. The banks of this famous river are beautifully fertile. Finding that we could keep up with the vessel, we amused ourselves the greatest part of the day in walking. The pleasure we feel on this classical ground, and the interest we take in all the objects around, is not altogether derived from their own native beauties ; a great part of it arises from the magic colouring of poetical description.

The accounts we have had lately of the King of Prussia's bad health, I suppose, are not true ; or if they are, I have good hopes he will recover : I found them on the calm and serene aspect which Eridanus wears at present, which is not the case when the fate of any very great person is depending. You remember, what a rage he was in, and what a tumult he raised,

immediately before the death of Julius
Cæsar.

Proluit infano contorquens vortice sylvas
Fluviorum Rex Eridanus, camposque per omnes;
Cum stabulis armenta tulit.

Dryden translates these lines,

Then rising in his might, the King of Floods
Rush'd thro' the forests, tore the lofty woods;
And, rolling onward, with a sweepy sway,
Bore houses, herds, and labouring hinds away.

Rising in his might is happy, but the
rest is not so simple as the original, and
much less expressive; there wants the *infano*
contorquens vortice sylvas.

It is not surprising that the Po is so
much celebrated by the Roman poets, since
it is, unquestionably, the finest river in
Italy.—

Where every stream in heavenly numbers flows.
It seems to have been the favourite river
of Virgil:

Gemina

Gemina auratus taurino cornua vultu
 Eridanus, quo non alius per pingua culta
 In mare purpureum violentior influit amnis.

And Mr. Addison, at the sight of this river, is inspired with a degree of enthusiasm, which does not always animate his poetry.

Fired with a thousand raptures, I survey,
 Eridanus thro' flowery meadows stray;
 The King of Floods! that, rolling o'er their
 plains,

The towering Alps of half their moisture drains,
 And, proudly swoln with a whole winter's snows,
 Distributes wealth and plenty where he flows.

Notwithstanding all that the Latin poets, and, in imitation of them, those of other nations, have sung of the Po, I am convinced that no river in the world has been so well sung as the Thames.

Thou too great father of the British floods!
 With joyful pride survey'st our lofty woods;
 Where tow'ring oaks their growing honours rear,
 And future navies on thy shores appear,

Not

Not Neptune's self, from all her streams,
receives

A wealthier tribute, than to thine he gives.
No seas so rich, so gay no banks appear,
No lake so gentle, and no spring so clear;
Nor Po so swells the fabling poets lays,
While led along the skies his current strays,
As thine, which visits Windsor's fam'd abodes.

If you are still refractory, and stand up
for the panegyrists of the Po, I must call
Denham in aid of my argument, and I
hope you will have the taste and candour
to acknowledge, that the following are,
beyond comparison, the noblest lines that
ever were written on a river.

My eye descending from the hill, surveys
Where Thames among the wanton vallies strays,
Thames, the most loved of all the Ocean's sons,
By his old sire, to his embraces runs;
Hasting to pay his tribute to the sea,
Like mortal Life to meet Eternity,
Though with those streams he no resemblance
hold,
Whose foam is amber, and their gravel gold;

His

His genuine and less guilty wealth t'explore,
Search not his bottom, but survey his shore;
O'er which he kindly spreads his spacious wing,
And hatches plenty for th' ensuing spring;
Nor then destroys it with too fond a stay,
Like mothers which their children overlay.
Nor with a sudden and impetuous wave,
Like profuse kings, resumes the wealth he gave.
No unexpected inundations spoil

The mower's hopes, nor mock the plowman's
toil:

But, godlike, his unweary'd bounty flows:
First loves to do, then loves the good he does.
Nor are his blessings to his banks confined,
But free and common, as the sea or wind;
When he, to boast, or to disperse his stores,
Full of the tribute of his grateful shores,
Visits the world, and in his flying towers,
Brings home to us, and makes both Indies ours;
Finds wealth where 'tis, bestows it where it wants,
Cities in deserts, woods in cities plants.
So that, to us, no thing, no place is strange,
While his fair bosom is the world's exchange.
O could I flow like thee, and make thy stream,
My great example, as it is my theme!

Though deep, yet clear; though gentle, yet not
dull;

Strong without rage, without o'erflowing full.

Heaven her Eridanus no more shall boast,
Whose fame in thine, like lesser current, 's lost.

You will suspect that I am hard pushed to make out a letter, when I send you such long quotations from the poets. This, however, is not my only reason. While we remain on the Po, rivers naturally become the subject of my letter. I asserted, that the Thames has been more sublimely sung than the favourite river of classical authors, and I wished to lay some of my strongest proofs before you at once, to save you the trouble of turning to the originals.

LETTER XXVI.

Ferrara.

WE arrived here early this morning. The magnificent streets and number of fine buildings shew that this has formerly been a rich and flourishing city. The present inhabitants, however, who are very few in proportion to the extent of the town, bear every mark of poverty.

The happiness of the subjects in a despotic government depends much more on the personal character of the sovereign, than in a free state; and the subjects of little Princes, who have but a small extent of territory, are more affected by the good and bad qualities of those Princes, than the inhabitants of great and extensive empires. I had frequent opportunities of making this remark in Germany, where, without having seen the Prince,

or heard his character, one may often discover his dispositions and turn of mind, from examining into the circumstances and general situation of the people. When the Prince is vain and luxurious, as he considers himself equal in rank, so he endeavours to vie in magnificence with more powerful sovereigns, and those attempts always terminate in the oppression and poverty of his subjects; but when the Prince, on the other hand, is judicious, active, and benevolent, as the narrow limits of his territories make it easy for him to be acquainted with the real situation and true interest of his subjects, his good qualities operate more directly and effectually for their benefit, than if his dominions were more extensive, and he himself obliged to govern by the agency of ministers.

The Duchy of Ferrara was formerly governed by its own Dukes, many of whom happened to be of the character last mentioned, and the Ferrarese was, for several
gene-

generations, one of the' happiest and most flourishing spots in Italy. In the year 1597 it was annexed to the Ecclesiastical State, and has ever since been gradually falling into poverty and decay. It must be owing to some essential error in the Government, when a town like this, situated in a fertile soil, upon a navigable river near the Adriatic, remains in poverty. Except the change of its Sovereign, all the other causes, which I have heard assigned for the poverty of Ferrara, existed in the days of its prosperity.

Though the citizens of Ferrara have not been able to preserve their trade and industry, yet they still retain an old privilege of wearing swords by their sides. This privilege extends to the lowest mechanics, who strut about with great dignity. Fencing is the only science in a flourishing condition in this town, which furnishes all the towns in Italy with skilful fencing-masters. Ferrara was famous formerly

merly for a manufactory of sword-blades. The Scotch Highlanders, who had a greater demand for swords, and were nicer in the choice of their blades than any other people, used to get them from a celebrated maker in this town, of the name of Andrea di Ferrara. The best kind of broadswords are still called by the Highlanders True Andrew Ferraras.

There are two brass statues opposite to one of the principal churches. One is of Nicholo Marquis of Este, and the other of Borso of Este, the first Duke of Ferrara, whose memory is still held in great veneration in this city. I had the curiosity to go to the Benedictine church, merely to see the place where Ariosto lies buried. The degree of importance in which men are held by their cotemporaries and by posterity, is very different. This fine fanciful old bard has done more honour to modern Italy, than forty-nine in fifty of the Popes and Princes to which she has given birth,
and,

and while those, who were the gaze of the multitude during their lives, are now entirely forgotten, his fame increases with the progress of time. In his lifetime, perhaps, his importance, in the eyes of his countrymen, arose from the protection of the family of Este; now he gives importance, in the eyes of all Europe, to the illustrious names of his patrons, and to the country where he was born.

The Emperor, and two of his brothers, lodged lately at the inn where we now are. Our landlord is so vain of this, that he cannot be prevailed on to speak on any other subject; he has entertained me with a thousand particulars about his illustrious guests; it is impossible he should ever forget those anecdotes, for he has been constantly repeating them ever since the Royal Brothers left his house. I asked him what we could have for supper. He answered, That we should sup in the very same room in which his Imperial Majesty had dined.

I repeated my question ; and he replied, he did not believe there were three more affable Princes in the world. I said, I hoped supper would be soon ready ; and he told me, that the Archduke was fond of fricassée, but the Emperor preferred a fowl plain roasted. I said, with an air of impatience, that I should be much obliged to him if he would send in supper. He bowed, and walked to the door ; but, before he disappeared, he turned about and assured me, that although his Majesty ate no more than an ordinary man, yet he paid like an Emperor.

To perpetuate the memory of this great event, of the Emperor and his two brothers having dined at this house, the landlord got an Ecclesiastic of his acquaintance to compose the following pompous inscription, which is now engraven upon a stone at the door of his inn.

QUOD

QUOD

TABERNA HÆC DIVERSORIA
 HOSPITES HABUERIT TRES FRATRES
 CONSILIIS, MORIBUS, ET IN DEUM PIETATE,
 PRÆCLAROS,
 MARIAE THERES. BOHEMIÆ ET HUNG.
 REGINÆ, &c. &c.
 ET TANTÆ MATRIS VIRTUTI SIMILLIMOS
 MAXIMILIANUM AUSTRIÆ ARCHIDUCEM;
 CENÆ ET QUIETATIS CAUSA,
 TERTIO CALEND. JUNII M.DCC.LXXV.
 DIE POSTERO PRANDIUM SUMPTUROS
 PETRUM LEOP. MAGN. HETRUC. DUCEM,
 ET JOSEPHUM SECUND. ROM. IMPERATOREM,
 SECULI NOSTRI ORNAMENTUM ET DECUS,
 NE TEMPORIS LONGITUDO
 HUIUSCE LOCI FELICITATEM OBLITERET
 PERENNE HOC MONUMENTUM.

No three persons ever acquired immortality on easier terms: it has only cost them one night's lodging at an indifferent inn, when better quarters could not be had.

LETTER XXVII.

Bologna.

WHEN we left Ferrara, our landlord insisted on our taking six horses to each chaise, on account of the badness of the roads, the soil about the town being moist and heavy. I attempted to remonstrate that four would be sufficient; but he cut me short, by protesting, that the roads were so very deep, that he would not allow the best friend he had in the world, not even the Emperor himself, were he there in person, to take fewer than six. There was no more to be said after this; the same argument would have been irresistible, had he insisted on our taking twelve.

As you draw near to Bologna, the country gradually improves in cultivation; and, for some miles before you enter the town, seems one continued garden. The vineyards are not divided by hedges, but by

ROWS

rows of elms and mulberry trees ; the vines hanging in a most beautiful picturesque manner, in festoons from one tree to another. This country is not only fertile in vines, but likewise in corn, olives, and pasturage, and has, not without foundation, acquired the name of Bologna la Grassa.

This town is well built, and populous ; the number of inhabitants amounting to seventy, or perhaps eighty thousand. The houses in general have lofty porticoes, which would have a better effect if the streets were not so narrow ; but in this particular, magnificence is sacrificed to conveniency ; for, in Italy, shade is considered as a luxury.

The Duchy of Bologna had conditions granted to it, upon submitting to the Papal dominion. Those conditions have been observed with a degree of punctuality and good faith, which many zealous Protestants would not expect in the Church of Rome.

Bologna retains the name of a republic, sends an ambassador to the Pope's court, and the word *Libertas* is inscribed on the arms and coin of the State, with the flattering capitals S. P. Q. B. The civil government and police of the town is allowed to remain in the hands of the magistrates, who are chosen by the Senate, which formerly consisted of forty members; but since this republic came under the protection, as it is called, of the Pope, he thought proper to add ten more, but the whole fifty still retain the name of the *Quaranta*. Mankind, in general, are more alarmed by a change of name, in things which they have long regarded with veneration, than by a real change in the nature of the things themselves. The Pope may have had some good political reason for augmenting the number of the council to fifty; but he could have none for calling them the Council of Fifty, if the people chose rather to call fifty men assembled together the Council of *Forty*. One of
the

the Senators presides in the Senate, and is called the Gonfalonier; from his carrying the standard (Gonfalone) of the republic. He is chief magistrate, is attended by guards, and is constantly at the palace, or near it, to be ready on any emergency; but he remains only two months in office, and the Senators take it by turns.

In the midst of all this appearance of independency, a Cardinal Legate from Rome governs this republic: he is appointed by the Pope, with a Vice Legate, and other assistants. The orders which the Legate issues, are supposed to be with the approbation of the Senate; at least, they are never disputed by that prudent body of men. The office, which is of higher dignity than any other now in the gift of the Court of Rome, continues for three years; at the expiration of that time, his Holiness either appoints a new Legate, or confirms the old one in the office for three years longer.

This ecclesiastical Viceroy lives in great magnificence, and has a numerous suite of pages, equerries, and halberdiers, who attend him in the city. When he goes into the country, he is accompanied by guards on horseback.

The Gonfalonier and magistrates regulate all the usual matters which regard the police, and decide, in common causes, according to the laws and ancient forms of the republic; but there is no doubt that, in affairs of great importance, and, indeed, as often as he chooses to interfere, the Cardinal Legate influences decisions. This must be mortifying to the Senators and noble families, but is less felt by the people in general, who have every appearance of living under a mild and beneficent Government.

The inhabitants of Bologna carry on a very considerable trade in silks and velvets, which are manufactured here in great perfection. The country produces immense quantities

quantities of oil, wine, flax, and hemp; and furnishes all Europe with sausages, Macaroni, liqueurs, and essences. The people seem to be industrious, and to be allowed to enjoy the fruits of their labour; the markets are most plentifully supplied with provisions; fruit is to be had in great variety, and all excellent in its kind; the common wine of the country is a light white wine of an agreeable taste, which strangers prefer to any of the French or German wines to be had here. Those who are not pleased with the entertainment they meet with at the inns in this city, it will be a difficult matter to please; they must be possessed of a degree of such nicety, both in their palates and tempers, as will render them exceedingly troublesome to themselves and others, not only in their travels through Italy, but in the whole course of their journey through life.

There are a great number of palaces in this city. What is called the Public Palace,
7 is,

is, by far, the most spacious, but not the most elegant. In this the Cardinal Legate is lodged. There are also apartments for the Gonfalonier; and halls, or chambers, for some of the courts of justice. This building, though of a gloomy and irregular form without, contains some very magnificent apartments, and a few good pictures: the most esteemed are, a large one, by Guido, of the Virgin, and the infant Jesus, seated on the rainbow; a Sampson, by Guido also, refreshing himself with the water which issues from the jaw-bone with which he has just defeated the Philistines; and a St. John the Baptist, by Raphael, a duplicate of that in the Palais Royal at Paris, but thought, by some connoisseurs, greatly inferior. For my part, I think it is to be regretted, that this great painter did not employ the time he spent on one of them, at least, on some subject more worthy of his talents. A single figure, unemployed, can never please so much as a groupe, occupied in some interesting

interesting action. It is a pity that a painter, capable, even in a moderate degree, of exciting the passions, should confine his talents to solitary figures. How much more unworthy of *him* who possessed all the sublimity and pathos of the art !

On his arrival at this town, the first object which strikes the eye of a stranger, is a noble marble fountain, in the area before the Palazzo Publico. The principal figure is a statue of Neptune, eleven feet in height ; one of his hands is stretched out before him, in the other he holds the Trident. The body and limbs are finely proportioned, the anatomy perfect, the character of the countenance severe and majestic. This figure of Neptune, as well as all the others of boys, dolphins, and sirens, which surround it, are in bronze. The whole is the workmanship of Giovanni di Bologna, and is highly esteemed ; yet there seems to be an impropriety in making
water

water flow in streams from the breasts of the sea nymphs, or syrens.

Over the entrance of the Legate's palace, is a bronze statue of a Pope. The tiara, and other parts of the Papal uniform, are not so favourable to the sculptor's genius, as the naked simplicity in which Neptune appears. A female traveller, however, not extravagantly fond of the fine arts, would rather be observed admiring the sculptor's skill in imitating the folds of the Sacerdotal robes, than his anatomical accuracy in forming the majestic proportions of the Sea Divinity.

LETTER XXVIII.

Bologna.

THE university of Bologna is one of the most ancient and most celebrated seats of literature in Europe; and the academy for the arts and sciences, founded by the Count Marfigli at the beginning of the present century, is sufficient, of itself, to engage strangers to visit this city, if there was nothing else worthy of their curiosity. Over the gate of this magnificent edifice is the following liberal inscription :

BONONIENSE SCIENTIARUM ATQUE ARTIUM
INSTITUTUM AD PUBLICUM TOTIUS
ORBIS USUM.

Here is a most valuable library, in three spacious rooms, where any person may study, and have the use of the books, four hours every day; also apartments for the students of sculpture, painting, architecture, chemistry,

chemistry, anatomy, astronomy, and every branch of natural philosophy. They are all ornamented with designs, models, instruments, and every kind of apparatus requisite for illustrating those sciences. There are also Professors, who regularly read lectures, and instruct the students in those various parts of knowledge. There is a hall, full of models in architecture and fortification, a valuable collection of medals, and another of natural curiosities, as animals, earths, ores, minerals, and a complete collection of specimens, to assist the study of the Materia Medica, and every part of Natural History. A gallery of statues, consisting of a few originals, and very fine casts of the best statues in Italy. I went one evening to the academy of painting and sculpture; two men stood in different attitudes on a table, in the middle of the room; about fifty students sat in the amphitheatre around them, some drawing their figures in chalks, others modelling them in wax, or clay. As each

student viewed the two men from different points, the variety of manner in the different students, together with the alteration in the Chiaro Scuro under each point of view, gave every drawing the appearance of being done from a different figure. Nothing can be so advantageous to the young student as this kind of exercise, which is sometimes practised by day-light, and sometimes by the light of lamps, and must give a fuller idea of the effect of light and shade than any other method.

Honorary premiums are distributed every year among the artists, for the best designs in painting, sculpture, and architecture.

The Anatomical Theatre is adorned with statues of celebrated physicians; and in the Museum, which belongs to it, there are abundance of anatomical preparations; also a complete suite of anatomical figures in wax. A man and woman in the natural state; the same with the skin and cellular membrane removed, the external
muscles

muscles of the whole body and limbs appearing. In the subsequent figures the more external muscles are gradually removed, till nothing but the simple skeleton remains. These figures are very well rendered, preserving the natural appearance and situation of the muscles and blood-vessels, with as much exactness as could be expected in a work of this nature. There are also models in wax, of particular parts, and of several of the viscera of the human body separately; yet those waxen models could not stand in comparison with the preparations of the real parts in Dr. Hunter's museum. If brought to that test, the Bologna waxworks, though admirable in their kind, would appear as their best casts of the Vatican Apollo and Laocoon would, if placed beside the originals. Indeed, the real preparations to be seen here, are far inferior to those of that great anatomist; who is now possessed of the most complete, and most accurate collection of anatomical preparations, that ever was made

made by human skill and industry. We have faithfully performed our duty in visiting all the churches and palaces of this city, which contain some of the highest specimens of art; yet, as the recital might be less amusing than the tour itself, I shall exercise your patience with great moderation on that subject.

The church of St. Petronius forms part of that large, irregular square, in which the fountain, formerly mentioned, stands; it is the largest in Bologna. In the pavement of this church, Cassini drew his meridian line; and within the walls of this same edifice the Emperor Charles the Fifth was crowned. Those circumstances may interest the astronomer, and the historian; but the statue of a soldier, which stands in one of the chapels, engages the attention of the pious Catholic. This man, being at play, and in danger of losing all his money, offered up a very fervent prayer to the Virgin Mary, for a little better luck;

to which she, who never shewed any favour to gamesters, turned a deaf ear. When he found that his bad fortune continued, this furious wretch drew his sword, and wounded both the Virgin, and the Infant in her arms. He instantly, as you may suppose, fell to the ground, deprived of motion; he was carried to prison, and condemned to an ignominious and painful death. While he remained under confinement, he came to a proper sense of his wickedness; and the blessed Virgin was so much softened by his repentance, that she restored him to the use of his limbs; and the Judges, taking the hint, gave him a full pardon. As a *satisfactory* proof of this memorable event, they shew the identical sword with which the assault was made.

A Dominican convent, situated on the top of a hill, about three miles from this city, is in possession of a portrait of the Virgin, by St. Luke. It is not
 4 perfectly

perfectly known how it came there; any enquiry of that nature favours of heresy, and might give offence. The people in general are persuaded of its originality, and happy in the honour of such a neighbour. This portrait has wrought many miracles in favour of the inhabitants of Bologna. A curious gallery, open to the south, and closed by a wall to the north, is built all the way from this city to the convent. On the open side it is supported by a long row of pillars, and was erected by voluntary contribution, in honour of the Virgin, and for the conveniency of pilgrims. This long colonade is about twelve feet in breadth, from the pillars to the wall, and of a convenient height; all the communities of the town walk once a year, in solemn procession, to the convent, and bring the holy picture to visit the city. It is carried through the principal streets, attended by every inhabitant who can afford to purchase a wax taper. During this pro-

cession, the bells continue ringing, the cannon are fired; and the troops under arms observe the same ceremonies, when the picture passes, as if it were Commander in Chief of the forces. The common people imagine, the picture is extremely fond of this annual visit to the town of Bologna; they even are convinced, that, if it were not carried, it would descend from the frame, and walk the whole way on foot; but they do not desire to see the experiment made, both because it might disoblige the Virgin, and because, if the picture were once set a walking, there is no knowing where it would stop.

Though the nobility of Bologna are not now very rich, many of their palaces are furnished in a magnificent taste, and contain paintings of great value. The palaces were built, and ornamented, when the proprietors were richer, and when the finest works of architecture and painting could be procured on easier terms than

at present. The galleries, and apartments, are spacious and magnificent; yet there are circumstances in the most splendid, that must hurt the eye of those who are accustomed to that perfect exactness in finishing which prevails in English houses. The glass of the windows of some palaces is divided into little square panes, which are joined together by lead; and the floors of all are so very indifferently laid, that you often feel a loose brick shaking under your feet as you walk through the finest apartments.

The most precious ornaments of the palaces are the paintings, particularly those of the celebrated masters which this city had the honour of producing. Raphael is generally allowed to have excelled all painters in the sublimity of his ideas, the grouping of his figures, the beauty of his heads, the elegance of his forms, and the correctness of his outlines; yet, in the opinion of some, he has oftener imitated

those noble ideas of beauty, transmitted to us by the Greek sculptors, than what he saw, or could observe, in nature. Those who hold this opinion assert, that the best masters of the Lombard School studied, with equal assiduity, the elegance of the antique statues, and the simplicity of nature; and from this combined attention to both, with geniuses less sublime, and not so universal, as that of the Roman painter, they have produced works equal, if not superior in some respects, to his. In all this, I beg you may keep in your remembrance, that I am not affecting to give any opinion of my own, but merely repeating the sentiments of others.

Next to Rome itself, there is, perhaps, no town in the world so rich in paintings as Bologna. The churches and palaces, besides many admired pieces by other masters, are full of the works of the great masters who were natives of this city. I must not lead you among those master-pieces;

pieces; it is not for so poor a judge as I am to point the peculiar excellencies of the Caraccis, Dominichino, Albano, or compare the energy of Guercino's pencil with the grace of Guido's. With regard to the last, I shall venture to say, that the graceful air of his young men, the elegant forms, and mild persuasive devotion, of his Madonas; the art with which, to all the inviting loveliness of female features, he joins all the gentleness and modesty which belong to the female character, are the peculiar excellencies of this charming painter.

It requires no knowledge in the art of painting, no connoisseurship, to discover those beauties in the works of Guido; all who have eyes, and a heart, must see and feel them. But the picture more admired than all the rest, and considered, by the judges, as his master-piece, owes its eminence to a different kind of merit; it can claim none from any of the circumstances above enumerated. The piece I mean is in

the Sampieri palace, and distinguished by a silk curtain, which hangs before it. The subject is, the Repentance of St. Peter, and consists of two figures, that of the Saint who weeps, and a young apostle who endeavours to comfort him. The only picture at Bologna, which can dispute celebrity with this, is that of St. Cecilia, in the church of St. Georgio in Monte. This picture is greatly praised by Mr. Addison, and is reckoned one of Raphael's capital pieces. If I had nothing else to convince me that I had no judgment in painting, this would be sufficient. I have examined it over and over with great attention, and a real desire of discovering its superlative merit; and I have the mortification to find, that I cannot perceive it.—After this confession, I presume you will not desire to hear any thing farther from me on the subject of painting.

LETTER XXIX.

Ancona,

IN our way from Bologna to this place, we passed through Ravenna, a disagreeable town, though at one period the seat of empire; for, after Attila had left Italy, Valentinian chose Ravenna, in preference to Rome, for his residence, that he might always be ready to repel the Huns and other Barbarians, who poured from the banks of the Danube, and prevent their penetrating into Italy. The same reason afterwards induced Theodoric, King of the Ostrogoths, to keep his court at this city of Ravenna, after he had defeated and killed Odoacer, and assumed the title of King of Rome. The ruins of his palace and his tomb now form part of the antiquities of Ravenna; among which I shall not detain you a moment, but proceed to the river of Pisatello, the famous Rubicon,

con, which lies between this town and Rimini, and was the ancient boundary between Italy and Cisalpine Gaul. No Roman, returning to Rome, could pass in arms beyond this, without being deemed an enemy to his country. The small town of Cesenate is situated near this brook, and the inhabitants value themselves not a little upon their vicinity to so celebrated a neighbour. But the people of Rimini have had the malice to endeavour to deprive them of this satisfaction: they affirm, that the rivulet Lusa, which is farther removed from Cesenate, and nearer to themselves, is the true Rubicon. I have considered this controversy with all the attention it merits; and I am of opinion, that the pretensions of Pisatello, which is also called Rugone, are the best founded. That you may not suspect my being influenced in my judgment by any motives but those of justice, I beg leave to inform you, that it is a matter of no importance to me which of the rivers is the real Rubicon, for we

had

had the honour of passing *both* in our way to Rimini.

What Suetonius mentions concerning Cæsar's hesitation when he arrived at the banks of this river, does not agree with what the historian says a little before. *Quidam putant captum Imperii consuetudine, pensitatisque suis & inimicorum viribus, usum occasione rapiendæ dominationis, quam ætate prima concupisset.* And this, he adds, was the opinion of Cicero, who says, that Cæsar had often in his mouth this verse :

*Nam si violandum est jus, regnandi gratia
Violandum est, aliis rebus pietatem colas.*

It is most probable, that Cæsar took his resolution to cross the Rubicon as soon as Antony and Curio arrived in his camp, and afforded him a plausible pretext, by informing him and the army of the violent manner in which they had been driven from Rome by the Consul Lentulus and the adherents of Pompey. As for the
phantom,

phantom, which Suetonius informs us determined the Dictator while he was yet in hesitation, we may either consider it entirely as a fiction, or as a scene previously arranged by himself to encourage his army, who may be supposed to have had scruples in disobeying a decree of the Senate; which declared those persons sacrilegious and parricides, devoting them at the same time to the infernal gods, who should pass over this river in arms. Cæsar was not of a character to be disturbed with religious scruples; he never delayed an enterprise, we are told, on account of unfavourable omens. *Ne religione quidem ulla a quoquam incepto absterritus unquam vel retardatus est. Quum immolanti aufugisset hostia, profectionem adversus Scipionem & Jubam non distulit, &c. &c.*

This hesitation, therefore, which is mentioned both by Suetonius and Plutarch, has no resemblance with the ambitious and decisive character of Julius Cæsar; the
picture

picture which Lucan has drawn of him has much more spirit, and in all probability more likeness.

Cæsar ut adversam superato gurgite ripam,
Attigit, Hesperiae vetitis & constitit arvis,
Hic, ait, hic pacem, temerataque jura relinquo;
Te, Fortuna, sequor; procul hinc jam foedera
funto.

Credidimus fatis, utendum est judice bello.
Sic fatus, noctis tenebris rapit agmina ductor
Impiger, & torto Ballaris verbere fundæ
Ocyor, & missa Parthi post terga sagitta;
Vicinumque minax invadit Ariminum—

Though Rimini is in a state of great decay, there are some monuments of antiquity worthy the attention of the curious traveller. It is the ancient Ariminum, the first town of which Cæsar took possession after passing the Rubicon. In the market-place there is a kind of stone pedestal, with an inscription, declaring, that on it Cæsar had stood and harangued his army; but the authenticity of this is not ascertained to the satisfaction of antiquarians.

We

We next passed through Pefaro, a very agreeable town, better built and paved than the other towns we have seen on the Adriatic shore. In the market-place there is a handsome fountain, and a statue of Pope Urban the Eighth, in a sitting posture. In the churches of this town there are some pictures by Baroccio, a painter, whose works some people esteem very highly, and who is thought to have imitated the manner of Raphael and the tints of Correggio, not without success. He lived about the middle of the sixteenth century, and his colours seem to have improved by time. I say, seem; for, in reality, all colours lose by time: but the operation of sun and air on pictures bringing all the colours to a kind of unison, occasions what is called Harmony, and is thought an improvement on some pictures. This road, along the Adriatic coast, is extremely pleasant. From Pefaro we proceeded to Fano, a little town, of nearly the same size, but more populous. It derives its name from
a Temple

a Temple of Fortune [Fanum Fortunæ], which stood here in the time of the Romans. All the towns of Italy, however religious they may be, are proud of their connections with those celebrated heathens. An image of the Goddess Fortune is erected on the fountain in the market-place, and the inhabitants show some ruins, which they pretend belong to the ancient Temple of Fortune; but what cannot be disputed, are the ruins of a triumphal arch in white marble, erected in honour of Augustus, and which was greatly damaged by the artillery of Pope Paul the Second, when he besieged this town in the year 1463. The churches of this town are adorned with some excellent pictures; there is one particularly in the cathedral church, by Guercino, which is much admired. The subject is the marriage of Joseph: it consists of three principal figures; the High Priest, Joseph, and the Virgin.

A few

A few miles beyond Fano, we crossed the river Metro, where Claudius Nero, the Roman Consul, defeated Asdrubal, the brother of Hannibal. This was, perhaps, the most important victory that ever was gained by a Roman General; for, had Asdrubal been victorious, or been able to effect a junction with his brother, the troops he brought from Spain would have become of triple value as soon as they were under the direction of Hannibal; and it is not improbable that, with such a reinforcement, that most consummate General would have put an end to the Roman State; the glory of Carthage would have begun where that of Rome ended; and the history of the world would have been quite different from what it is. Horace seems sensible of the infinite importance of this victory, and proclaims with a fine poetic enthusiasm, the obligations which Rome owed to the family of the hero who obtained it, and the terror which, before
that

that time, Hannibal had spread over all Italy.

Quid debeas, O Roma, Neronibus,
Testis Metaurum flumen, et Asdrubal
Devictus, et pulcher fugatis
Ille dies Latio tenebris,
Qui primus almâ risit adorea;
Dirus per urbes Afer ut Italas,
Ceus flamma per tedas, vel Eurus
Per Siculas equitavit undas.

We came next to Senegallia, another sea-port town upon this coast. There is nothing remarkable in this town, except during the time of the fair, which is held there once a year, to which a great concourse of merchants resort, from Venice, and all the towns on both sides of the Adriatic; also from Sicily, and the Archipelago. England carries on a very profitable trade with all the towns in Romagna, from which our merchants purchase great quantities of raw silk, and afterwards sell it, when manufactured, to the inhabitants.

They provide them also in English cotton and linen cloths, of every kind.

The distance between Senegallia and Ancona, is about fifteen miles. We travelled most of this road after it was dark, much against the inclination of the Italian servants, who assured us, that it is often infested with robbers. Those fellows, they told us, come sometimes from the coast of Dalmatia, attack travellers on this road, carry what booty can be got, on board their boats, which are never at a great distance, and then sail to the opposite shore, or to some other part of the coast. As we travelled slowly over the sandy road, some men, in sailors dresses, overtook us. Our Italians were convinced they belonged to the gang of pirates, or robbers, they had spoken of. Our company was too numerous to be attacked ; but they attempted, secretly, to cut off the trunks from the chaises, without succeeding.

LETTER XXX.

Ancona.

ANCONA is said to have been founded by Syracusans who had fled from the tyranny of Dionysius. The town originally was built upon a hill, but the houses have been gradually extended down the face of the eminence, towards the sea. The cathedral stands on the highest part; from whence there is a most advantageous view of the town, the country, and the sea. This church is supposed to be placed on the spot where a temple, dedicated to Venus, formerly stood; the same mentioned by Juvenal, when he speaks of a large turbot caught on this coast, and presented to the Emperor Domitian.

*Incidit Adriaci spatium admirabile rhombi,
Ante domum Veneris, quam Dorica sustinet*
Ancon.

The ascents and descents, and great inequality of the ground, will prevent this from being a beautiful town, but it has much the appearance of becoming a rich one. Some of the nobility have the firmness and good sense to despise an ancient prejudice, and avowedly prosecute commerce. New houses are daily building, and the streets are animated with the bustle of trade. I met with several English traders on the Change, which seemed crowded with sea-faring men, and merchants, from Dalmatia, Greece, and many parts of Europe. There are great numbers of Jews established in this city. I know not whether this race of men contribute greatly to the prosperity of a country; but it is generally remarked, that those places are in a thriving condition to which they resort. They have a synagogue here, and although all religions are tolerated, theirs is the only foreign worship allowed to be publicly exercised. The commerce of Ancona has increased very rapidly of late years; and

it is evident, that the Popes who first thought of making it a free port, of encouraging manufactures, and of building a mole, to render the harbour more safe, have injured Venice in a more sensible manner, than those who thundered bulls against that republic; but it is much to be questioned, whether the former, by their encouragements to commerce, have augmented their own spiritual importance in the same proportion they have the temporal riches of their subjects.

Men who have received a liberal education, and have adopted liberal sentiments previous to their engaging in any particular profession, will carry these sentiments along with them through life: and, perhaps, there is no profession in which they can be exercised with more advantage and utility, than in that of a merchant. In this profession, a man of the character above described, while he is augmenting his own private fortune, will enjoy the

agreeable reflection, that he is likewise increasing the riches and power of his country, and giving bread to thousands of his industrious countrymen. Of all professions, his is in its nature the most independent: the merchant does not, like the soldier, receive wages from his sovereign; nor, like the lawyer and physician, from his fellow-subjects. His wealth often flows from foreign sources, and he is under no obligation to those from whom it is derived. The habit which he is in, of circulating millions, makes him lay less stress on a few guineas, than the proprietors of the largest estates; and we daily see, particularly in countries where this profession is not considered as degrading, the commercial part of the inhabitants giving the most exalted proofs of generosity and public spirit. But in countries where nobody, who has the smallest claim to the title of a gentleman, can engage in commerce without being thought to have demeaned himself, fewer examples of this nature will be found: and in every country, it must be acknowledged, that
those

those who have not had the advantage of a liberal education ; who have been bred from their infancy to trade ; who have been taught to consider money as the most valuable of all things, and to value themselves, and others, in proportion to the quantity they possess ; who are continually revolving in their minds, to the exclusion of all other ideas, the various means of increasing their stock ; to such people, money becomes a more immediate and direct object of attention, than to any other class of men ; it swells in their imagination, is rated beyond its real worth, and, at length, by an inversion of the Christian precept, it is considered as the one thing needful, to be fought with the most unremitting ardour, that all other things may be added thereunto.

In commercial towns, where every body finds employment, and is agitated by the bustle of business, the minds of the inhabitants are apt to be so much engrossed

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with

with the affairs of this world, as almost to forget that there is another; and neither the true religion, nor false ones, have such hold of their minds, as in places where there is more poverty, and less worldly occupation. In the first, they consider the remonstrances of priests and confessors as interruptions to business; and, without daring to despise the ceremonies of religion, like the speculative Sceptic or Infidel, the hurried trader huddles them over as fast as possible, that he may return to occupations more congenial with the habit of his mind. The preachers may cry aloud, and spare not; they may lift up their voices like trumpets, proclaiming the nothingness of this world, and all which it contains; it is in vain. Men who have been trained to the pursuit of money from their childhood, who have bestowed infinite pains to acquire it, and who derive all their importance from it, must naturally have a partiality for this world, where riches procure so many flattering distinctions; and a prejudice
against

against *that* in which they procure none: but in towns where there is little trade, and great numbers of poor people, where they have much spare time, and small comfort in this world, the clergy have an easier task, if they are tolerably assiduous, in turning the attention of the inhabitants to the other. In Roman Catholic towns of this description, we see the people continually pacing up and down the streets, with wax tapers in their hands. They listen, with fond attention, to all the priest relates concerning that invisible country, that Land of Promise, where their hopes are placed; they ruminate, with complacency, on the happy period when *they* also shall have their good things; they bear their present rags with patience, in expectation of the white raiment and crowns of gold, which, they are told, await them; they languish for the happiness of being promoted to that lofty situation, from whence they may look down, with scorn, on those to whom they now look up with envy,

envy, and where they shall retaliate on their wealthy neighbours, whose riches, at present, they imagine, insult their own poverty.

This town being exposed, by the nature of its commerce with Turkey, to the contagious diseases which prevail in that country, Clement XII., as soon as he determined to make it a free port, erected a lazaretto. It advances a little way into the sea, is in the form of a pentagon, and is a very noble, as well as useful, edifice. He afterwards began a work, as necessary, and still more expensive; I mean the Mole built in the sea, to screen the vessels in the harbour from the winds, which frequently blow from the opposite shore of the Adriatic with great violence. This was carried on with redoubled spirit by Benedict XIV. after his quarrel with Venice, has been continued by the succeeding Popes, and is now almost finished. This building was founded in the ruins of the ancient Mole,
raised

raised by the Emperor Trajan. The stone of Istria was used at first, till the exportation of it was prohibited by the republic of Venice, who had no reason to wish well to this work. But a quarry of excellent stone was afterwards found near Ancona, as fit for the purpose; and a kind of sand, which, when mixed with lime, forms a composition as hard as any stone, is brought from the neighbourhood of Rome; and no other is used for this building, which is above two thousand feet in length, one hundred in breadth, and about sixty in depth, from the surface of the sea. A stupendous work, more analogous to the power and revenues of ancient, than of modern, Rome.

Near to this stands the Triumphal Arch, as it is called, of Trajan. This is an honorary monument, erected in gratitude to that Emperor, for the improvements he made in this harbour at his own expence. Next to the *Maison Quarrée* at Nîmes, it is

the most beautiful and the most entire monument of Roman taste and magnificence I have yet seen. The fluted Corinthian pillars on the two sides are of the finest proportions; and the Parian marble of which they are composed, instead of having acquired a black colour, like the Ducal palace of Venice, and other buildings of marble, is preserved, by the sea vapour, as white and shining as if it were fresh polished from the rock. I viewed this charming piece of antiquity with sentiments of pleasure and admiration, which sprang from a recollection of the elegant taste of the artist who planned this work, the humane amiable virtues of the great man to whose honour it was raised, and the grandeur and policy of the people who, by such rewards, prompted their Princes to wise and beneficent undertakings.

LETTER XXXI.

Loretto.

TH E road from Ancona to this place runs through a fine country, composed of a number of beautiful hills and intervening vallies. Loretto itself is a small town, situated on an eminence, about three miles from the sea. I expected to have found it a more magnificent, at least a more commodious, town for the entertainment of strangers. The inn-keepers do not disturb the devotion of the pilgrims by the luxuries of either bed or board. I have not seen worse accommodations since I entered Italy, than at the inn here. This seems surprising, considering the great resort of strangers. If any town in England were as much frequented, every third or fourth house would be a neat inn.

The

The Holy Chapel of Loretto, all the world knows, was originally a small house in Nazareth, inhabited by the Virgin Mary, in which she was saluted by the Angel, and where she bred our Saviour. After their deaths, it was held in great veneration by all believers in Jesus, and at length consecrated into a chapel, and dedicated to the Virgin; upon which occasion St. Luke made that identical image, which is still preserved here, and dignified with the name of our Lady of Loretto. This sanctified edifice was allowed to sojourn in Galilee as long as that district was inhabited by Christians; but when infidels got possession of the country, a band of angels, to save it from pollution, took it in their arms, and conveyed it from Nazareth to a castle in Dalmatia. This fact might have been called in question by incredulous people, had it been performed in a secret manner; but, that it might be manifest to the most short-sighted spectator, and evident to all who were not perfectly deaf as well as blind,

blind, a blaze of celestial light, and a concert of divine music, accompanied it during the whole journey ; besides, when the angels, to rest themselves, set it down in a little wood near the road, all the trees of the forest bowed their heads to the ground, and continued in that respectful posture as long as the Sacred Chapel remained among them. But, not having been entertained with suitable respect at the castle above mentioned, the same indefatigable angels carried it over the sea, and placed it in a field belonging to a noble lady, called Lauretta, from whom the Chapel takes its name. This field happened unfortunately to be frequented at that time by highwaymen and murderers : a circumstance with which the angels undoubtedly were not acquainted when they placed it there. After they were better informed, they removed it to the top of a hill belonging to two brothers, where they imagined it would be perfectly secure from the dangers of robbery or assassination ; but the two brothers,

thers,

thers, the proprietors of the ground, being equally enamoured of their new visitor, became jealous of each other, quarrelled, fought, and fell by mutual wounds. After this fatal catastrophe, the angels in waiting finally moved the Holy Chapel to the eminence where it now stands, and has stood these four hundred years, having lost all relish for travelling.

To silence the captious objections of cavillers, and give full satisfaction to the candid inquirer, a deputation of respectable persons was sent from Loretto to the city of Nazareth, who, previous to their setting out, took the dimensions of the Holy House with the most scrupulous exactness. On their arrival at Nazareth, they found the citizens scarcely recovered from their astonishment; for it may be easily supposed, that the sudden disappearance of a house from the middle of a town, would naturally occasion a considerable degree of surprise, even in the most philosophic

sophic minds. The landlords had been alarmed in a particular manner, and had made enquiries, and offered rewards, all over Galilee, without having been able to get any satisfactory account of the fugitive. They felt their interest much affected by this incident; for, as houses had never before been considered as *moveables*, their value fell immediately. This indeed might be partly owing to certain evil-minded persons, who, taking advantage of the public alarm, for selfish purposes, circulated a report, that several other houses were on the wing, and would most probably disappear in a few days. This affair being so much the object of attention at Nazareth, and the builders of that city declaring, they would as soon build upon quick-sand as on the vacant space which the Chapel had left at its departure, the deputies from Loretto had no difficulty in discovering the foundation of that edifice, which they carefully compared with the dimensions they had brought from Loretto,

and found that they tallied exactly. Of this they made oath at their return ; and in the mind of every rational person, it remains no longer a question, whether this is the real house which the Virgin Mary Inhabited, or not. Many of those particulars are narrated with other circumstances in books which are sold here ; but I have been informed of one circumstance, which has not hitherto been published in any book, and which, I dare swear, you will think ought to be made known for the benefit of future travellers. This morning, immediately before we left the inn, to visit the Holy Chapel, an Italian servant, whom the D— of H—— engaged at Venice, took me aside, and told me, in a very serious manner, that strangers were apt secretly to break off little pieces of the stone belonging to the Santa Casa, in the hopes that such precious relics might bring them good fortune ; but he earnestly entreated me not to do any such thing : for he knew a man at Venice, who had

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broken

broken off a small corner of one of the stones, and slipped it into his breeches pocket unperceived; but, so far from bringing him good fortune, it had burnt its way out, like aqua fortis, before he left the Chapel, and scorched his thighs in such a miserable manner, that he was not able to sit on horseback for a month. I thanked Giovanni for his obliging hint, and assured him I should not attempt any theft of that nature.

LETTER XXXII.

Loretto.

THE Sacred Chapel stands due east and west, at the farther end of a large church of the most durable stone of Istria, which has been built around it. This may be considered as the external covering, or as a kind of great coat to the Casa Santa, which has a smaller coat of more precious materials and workmanship nearer its body. This internal covering, or case, is of the choicest marble, after a plan of San Savino's, and ornamented with basso relievos, the workmanship of the best sculptors which Italy could furnish in the reign of Leo the Tenth. The subject of those basso relievos are, the history of the Blessed Virgin, and other parts of the Bible. The whole case is about fifty feet long, thirty in breadth, and the same in height; but the real house itself is no more than
thirty-

thirty-two feet in length, fourteen in breadth, and at the sides, about eighteen feet in height; the centre of the roof is four or five feet higher. The walls of this little Holy Chapel are composed of pieces of a reddish substance, of an oblong square shape, laid one upon another, in the manner of brick. At first sight, on a superficial view, these red-coloured oblong substances appear to be nothing else than common Italian bricks; and, which is still more extraordinary, on a second and third view, with all possible attention, they still have the same appearance. There is not, however, as we were assured, a single particle of brick in their whole composition, being entirely of a stone, which, though it cannot now be found in Palestine, was formerly very common, particularly in the neighbourhood of Nazareth. There is a small interval between the walls of the ancient house, and the marble case. The workmen, at first, intended them to be in
Z 3 contact,

contact, from an opinion, founded either upon gross ignorance or infidelity, that the former stood in need of support from the latter; but the marble either started back of itself, from such impious familiarity, being conscious of its unworthiness; or else was thrust back by the coyness of the Virgin brick, it is not said which. But it has certainly kept at a proper distance ever since. While we examined the basso relievos of the marble case, we were not a little incommoded by the numbers of pilgrims who were constantly crawling around it on their knees, kissing the ground, and saying their prayers with great fervour. As they crept along, they discovered some degree of eagerness to be nearest the wall; not, I am persuaded, with a view of saving their own labour, by contracting the circumference of their circuit; but from an idea that the evolutions they were performing, would be the more beneficial to their souls, the nearer they were

were to the Sacred House. This exercise is continued in proportion to the zeal and strength of the patient.

Above the door there is an inscription ; by which it appears, that any person who enters with arms is, ipso facto, excommunicated.

INGREDIENTES CUM ARMIS SUNT
EXCOMMUNICATI.

There are also the severest denunciations against those who carry away the smallest particle of the stone and mortar belonging to this Chapel. The adventure of the burnt breeches, and others of a similar nature, which are industriously circulated, have contributed as much as any denunciation, to prevent such attempts. Had it not been for the impressions they make, so great was the eagerness of the multitude to be possessed of any portion of this little edifice, that the whole was in danger of being carried away ; not by angels, but piecemeal in the pockets of the pilgrims.

The Holy House is divided, within, into two unequal portions, by a kind of grate-work of silver. The division towards the west is about three-fourths of the whole; that to the east is called the Sanctuary. In the larger division, which may be considered as the main body of the house, the walls are left bare, to shew the true original fabric of Nazareth stone. These stones, which bear such a strong resemblance to bricks, are loose in many places. I took notice of this to a pilgrim, who entered with us: he smiled, saying, "Che la non habbia paura, Padron mio, questi muri sono piu solidi degli Appenini." At the lower, or western wall, there is a window, the same through which the angel Gabriel entered at the Annunciation. The architraves of this window are covered with silver. There are a great number of golden and silver lamps in this Chapel; I did not count them, but I was told there were above sixty; one of them is a present from the republic of Venice: it is of gold, and weighs

weighs thirty-seven pounds: some of the silver lamps weigh from one hundred and twenty, to one hundred and thirty pounds. At the upper end of the largest room is an altar, but so low, that from it you may see the famous image which stands over the chimney, in the small room, or Sanctuary. Golden and silver angels, of considerable size, kneel around her, some offering hearts of gold, enriched with diamonds, and one an infant of pure gold. The wall of the Sanctuary is plated with silver, and adorned with crucifixes, precious stones, and votive gifts of various kinds. The figure of the Virgin herself by no means corresponds with the fine furniture of her house: she is a little woman, about four feet in height, with the features and complexion of a negro. Of all the sculptors that ever existed, assuredly St. Luke, by whom this figure is said to have been made, is the least of a flatterer; and nothing can be a stronger proof of the blessed Virgin's contempt for external beauty,

beauty, than her being satisfied with this representation of her; especially if, as I am inclined to believe, her face and person really resembled those beautiful ideas of her, conveyed by the pencils of Raphael, Corregio, and Guido. The figure of the infant Jesus, by St. Luke, is of a piece with that of the Virgin: he holds a large golden globe in one hand, and the other is extended in the act of blessing. Both figures have crowns on their heads, enriched with diamonds: these were presents from Ann of Austria, Queen of France. Both arms of the Virgin are inclosed within her robes, and no part but her face is to be seen; her dress is most magnificent, but in a wretched bad taste: this is not surprising, for she has no female attendant. She has particular clothes for the different feasts held in honour of her, and, which is not quite so decent, is always dressed and undressed by the priests belonging to the Chapel; her robes are ornamented with all kinds of precious stones, down to the hem of her garment.

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There is a small place behind the Sanctuary, into which we were also admitted. This is a favour seldom refused to strangers of a decent appearance. In this they shew the chimney, and some other furniture, which, they pretend, belonged to the Virgin when she lived at Nazareth; particularly a little earthen porringer, out of which the infant used to eat. The pilgrims bring rosaries, little crucifixes, and Agnus Dei's, which the obliging priest shakes for half a minute in this dish; after which, it is believed, they acquire the virtue of curing various diseases, and prove an excellent preventative of all temptations of Satan. The gown which the image had on when the chapel arrived from Nazareth, is of red camblet, and carefully kept in a glass shrine.

Above a hundred masses are daily said in this Chapel, and in the church in which it stands. The music we heard in the
Chapel

Chapel was remarkably fine. A certain number of the chaplains are eunuchs, who perform the double duty of singing the offices in the choir, and saying masses at the altar. The canonical law, which excludes persons in their situation from the priesthood, is eluded by a very extraordinary expedient, which I shall leave you to guess.

The jewels and riches to be seen at any one time in the Holy Chapel, are of small value in comparison of those in the treasury, which is a large room adjoining to the vestry of the great church. In the presses of this room are kept those presents which royal, noble, and rich bigots of all ranks have, by oppressing their subjects, and injuring their families, sent to this place. To enumerate every particular, would fill volumes. They consist of various utensils, and other things in silver and gold; as lamps, candlesticks, goblets, crowns, and crucifixes; lambs, eagles, saints, apostles, angels,

angels, virgins, and infants : then there are cameos, pearls, gems, and precious stones of all kinds, and in great numbers. What is valued above all the other jewels is, the miraculous pearl, wherein they assert, that Nature has given a faithful delineation of the Virgin, sitting on a cloud, with the infant Jesus in her arms. I freely acknowledge, that I did see something like a woman with a child in her arms ; but whether Nature intended this as a portrait of the Virgin Mary, or not, I will not take upon me to say ; yet I will candidly confess (though, perhaps, some of my friends in the north, may think it is saying too much in support of the Popish opinion) that the figure in this pearl bore as great a likeness to some pictures I have seen of the Virgin, as to any female of my acquaintance.

There was not room in the presses of the treasury, to hold all the silver pieces which have been presented to the Virgin.

Several other presses in the vestry, they told us, were completely full, and they made offer to shew them ; but our curiosity was already fatiated.

It is said, that those pieces are occasionally melted down, by his Holiness, for the use of the State ; and also, that the most precious of the jewels are picked out, and sold for the same purpose, false stones being substituted in their room. This is an affair entirely between the Virgin and the Pope : if she does not, I know no other person who has a right to complain.

LETTER XXXIII.

Loretto.

PILGRIMAGES to Loretto are not so frequent with foreigners, or with Italians of fortune and distinction, as formerly, nineteen out of twenty of those, who make this journey now, are poor people, who depend for their maintenance on the charity they receive on the road. To those who are of such a rank in life as precludes them from availing themselves of the charitable institutions for the maintenance of pilgrims, such journies are attended with expence and inconveniency; and I am informed, that fathers and husbands, in moderate or confined circumstances, are frequently brought to disagreeable dilemmas, by the rash vows of going to Loretto, which their wives or daughters are apt to make on any supposed deliverance from danger. To refuse, is
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considered, by the whole neighbourhood, as cruel, and even impious; and to grant, is often highly distressing, particularly to such husbands as, from affection, or any other motive, do not choose that their wives should be long out of their sight. But the poor, who are maintained during their whole journey, and have nothing more than a bare maintenance to expect from their labour at home, to them a journey to Loretto is a party of pleasure, as well as devotion, and by much the most agreeable road they can take to heaven. This being a year of jubilee, there is a far greater concourse of pilgrims of all ranks here, at present, than is usual. We have seen a few in their carriages, a greater number on horseback, or on mules; or, what is still more common, on asses. Great numbers of females come in this manner, with a male friend walking by them, as their guide and protector; but the greatest number, of both sexes, are on foot. When we approached near Loretto, the road was crowded

crowded with them: they generally set out before sun-rise; and, having reposed themselves during the heat of the day, continue their journey again in the evening. They sing their matins, and their evening hymns, aloud. As many have fine voices and delicate ears, those vocal concerts have a charming effect at a little distance. During the stillness of the morning and the evening, we were serenaded with this solemn religious music for a considerable part of the road. The pilgrims on foot, as soon as they enter the suburbs, begin a hymn in honour of the Virgin, which they continue till they reach the church. The poorer sort are received into an hospital, where they have bed and board for three days.

The only trade of Loretto consists of rosaries, crucifixes, little Madonnas, Agnus Dei's, and medals, which are manufactured here, and sold to pilgrims. There are great numbers of shops full of these

commodities, some of them of a high price; but infinitely the greater part are adapted to the purses of the buyers, and sold for a mere trifle. The evident poverty of those manufacturers and traders, and of the inhabitants of this town in general, is a sufficient proof that the reputation of our Lady of Loretto is greatly on the decline.

In the great church, which contains the Holy Chapel, are confessionals, where the penitents from every country of Europe may be confessed in their own language, priests being always in waiting for that purpose: each of them has a long white rod in his hand, with which he touches the heads of those to whom he thinks it proper to give absolution. They place themselves on their knees, in groupes, around the confessional chair; and when the Holy Father has touched their heads with the expiatory rod, they retire, freed from the burden of their sins, and with renewed

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renewed courage to begin a fresh account.

In the spacious area before this church, there is an elegant marble fountain, supplied with water from an adjoining hill, by an aqueduct. Few even of the most inconsiderable towns of Italy are without the useful ornament of a public fountain.

The embellishments of sculpture and architecture are employed, with great propriety, on such works, which are continually in the people's view; the air is refreshed, and the eye delighted, by the streams of water they pour forth; a sight peculiarly agreeable in a warm climate. In this area there is also a statue of Sixtus V., in bronze. Over the portal of the church itself, is a statue of the Virgin; and above the middle gate, is a Latin inscription, importing, that within is the House of the Mother of God, in which the Word was made flesh. The gates of the church are likewise of bronze, embellished with basso

A a 2 relievos,

relievos, of admirable workmanship; the subjects taken partly from the Old, and partly from the New, Testament, and divided into different compartments. As the gates of this church are shut at noon, the pilgrims who arrive after that time can get no nearer the Santa Casa than these gates, which are, by this means, sometimes exposed to the first violence of that holy ardour which was designed for the Chapel itself. All the sculpture upon the gates, which is within reach of the mouths of those zealots, is, in some degree, effaced by their kisses. The murder of Abel, by his brother, is upon a level with the lips of a person of an ordinary size, when kneeling. Poor Abel has been always unfortunate; had he been placed a foot higher, or lower, on the gate, he might have remained there, in security, for ages; but, in the unlucky place that the sculptor has put him, his whole body has been almost entirely kissed away by the pilgrims; whilst Cain stands, untouched,

untouched, in his original altitude, frowning and fierce as ever.

I have said nothing of the paintings to be seen here, though some are highly esteemed, particularly two in the Treasury. The subject of one of these is, the Virgin's Nativity, by Annibale Carracci; and of the other, a Holy Family, by Raphael. There are some others of considerable merit, which ornament the altars of the great church. These altars, or little chapels, of which this fabric contains a great number, are lined with marble, and embellished by sculpture; but nothing within this church interested me so much as the iron grates before those chapels, after I was informed that they were made of the fetters and chains of the Christian slaves, who were freed from bondage by the glorious victory of Lepanto. From that moment these iron grates commanded my attention more than all the golden lamps and candle-

sticks, and angels and jewels, of the Holy Chapel.

The ideas that rush into one's mind on hearing a circumstance of this kind, are affecting beyond expression. To think of four thousand of our fellow-creatures, torn from the service of their country and the arms of friendship, chained to oars, subjected continually to the revilings of enemies, and every kind of ignominious treatment, at once, when their souls were sinking under the weight of such accumulated calamity, and brought to the very verge of despair; at once, in one blessed moment, freed from slavery, restored to the embraces of their friends, and enjoying, with them, all the rapture of victory. Good God, what a scene! what a number of scenes! for the imagination, after glancing at the whole, distinguishes and separates objects, and forms a thousand groupes of the most pathetic kind; the fond recognition

reunion of old companions, brothers flying into each other's arms, and the ecstasy of fathers on the recovery of their lost sons. Many such pictures did my fancy form, while I stood contemplating those grates so truly ornamental of a Christian church, and so perfectly congenial with a religion which requires men to *relieve the oppressed, and set the captive free.*

Happy if the followers of that religion had always observed this divine admonition. I speak not of those men who assume the name of Christians for the purposes of interest or ambition, but of a more absurd class of mankind; those who, believing in Christianity, endeavour to reconcile it to a conduct, and doctrines, entirely repugnant to its nature. This absurdity has appeared in the human character from the earliest ages of Christianity. Men have displayed unaffected zeal, and endeavoured to support and propagate the most benevolent and rational of all religions, by actions

worthy of demons, and arguments which shock common sense.

The same persons who praised and admired the heavenly benevolence of this sentiment, Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy; have thought it a duty to condemn their fellow-creatures to cruel deaths for speculative opinions. The same men who admired the founder of Christianity for going about, continually, doing good, have thought it a duty to spend their whole lives in cells, doing nothing.

And can any thing be more opposite to those dark and inexplicable doctrines, on the belief of which, according to the conviction of many, our salvation depends, than this plain rule, Whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them? a rule so plain, as to be understood by the most simple and ignorant; and so just, complete, and comprehensive, as to be admired by the wisest and most learned.

If this equitable maxim is the law and the prophets, and we learn from the highest authority that it is, what becomes of all those mysterious webs, of various texture, which, since the beginning of the Christian æra, Popes, Priests, and many of the leaders of sectaries, have wove around it?

LETTER XXXIV.

Spoleto.

WE left Loretto after dinner, and proceeded through a beautiful country to Macerata, a small town, situated on a hill, as the towns in Italy generally are. We only stayed to change horses, and continued our journey to Tolentino; where, not thinking it expedient to begin to ascend the Apennines in the dark, we took up our quarters at an inn, the best in the place, but, by many degrees, the poorest we had seen in Italy. However, as it was not for good eating or convenient bed-chambers we came to this country, that circumstance affected us very little. Indeed, the quantity of victuals presented us at supper, would have been as displeasing to a person of Sancho Pancho's way of thinking, on the subject of eating, as the manner they were dressed would have been

to

to a nicer sensualist in that refined science. The latter circumstance prevented our regretting the former; and although we had felt some uneasiness when we were told how little provisions there were in the house, the moment they appeared on the table we were all convinced there was more than enough.

The poor people of this inn, however, shewed the utmost desire to please. *They* must have unfortunate tempers indeed, who, observing this, could have shocked them by fretfulness, or an air of dissatisfaction. Besides, if the entertainment had been still more homely, even those travellers who are accustomed to the greatest delicacies, might be induced to bear it with patience for one night, from this consideration, That the people of the place, who have just as good a natural right to the luxuries of life as themselves, are obliged to bear it always. Nothing is more apt to raise indignation, than to behold men repining and fretting,
on

on account of little inconveniencies, in the hearing of those who are bearing much greater every day with cheerfulness. There is a want of sense, as well as a want of temper, in such behaviour. The only use of complaining of hardships to those who cannot relieve them, must be to obtain sympathy; but if those to whom they complain, are suffering the same hardships in a greater degree, what sympathy can those repiners expect? They certainly find none.

Next morning we encountered the Apennines. The fatigue of this day's journey was compensated by the beauty and variety of the views among those mountains. On the face of one of the highest, I remarked a small hut, with a garden near it. I was told this was inhabited by an old infirm Hermit. I could not understand how a person in that condition could scramble up and down such a mountain to procure for himself the necessaries of life. I was informed, he had not quitted his hermitage for

for several years, the neighbouring peasants supplying him plentifully with all he requires. This man's reputation for sanctity is very great, and those who take the trouble of carrying him provisions, think themselves well repaid by his prayers.

I imagine I am acquainted with a country where provisions are in greater plenty than in the Apeninnes; and yet the greatest saint in the nation, who should take up his residence on one of its mountains, would be in great danger of starving, if he depended for his sustenance upon the provisions that should be carried up to him in exchange for his prayers.

There are mountains and precipices among the Apennines, which do not appear contemptible in the eyes even of those who have travelled among the Alps; while on the other hand, those delightful plains, contained within the bosom of the former, are infinitely superior, in beauty and fertility, to the vallies among the latter. We

now

now entered the rich province of Umbria, and soon after arrived at Foligno, a thriving town, in which there is more appearance of industry than in any of the towns we have seen, since we left Ancona ; there are considerable manufactures of paper, cloth, and silk. In a convent of Nuns, is a famous picture by Raphael, generally visited by travellers, and much admired by connoisseurs.

The situation of this town is peculiarly happy. It stands in a charming valley, laid out in corn-fields and vineyards, intersected by mulberry and almond trees, and watered by the river Clitumnus ; the view terminating on one side by hills crowned with cities, and on the other by the loftiest mountains of the Apennines. I never experienced such a sudden and agreeable change of climate, as on descending from those mountains, in many places, at present, covered with snow, to this pleasant valley of Umbria,

Where

Where western gales eternally reside,
And all the seasons lavish all their pride.

From Foligno to Vene, the road lies through this fine plain. A little before you come to the post-house at Vene, on the right hand, there is a little building; the front which looks to the valley, is adorned with six Corinthian pillars; the two in the middle enriched by a laurel foliage: on one side, is a crucifix in basso relievo, with vine branches curling around it. On this building, there are some inscriptions which mention the *resurrection*. Some, who think the architecture too fine for the first ages of Christianity, and the Temple too old to have been built since the revival of that art, have conjectured, that this little edifice is antique, and originally erected by the ancient inhabitants of Umbria, as a temple, in honour of the river God Clitumnus; but, at some subsequent period, converted into a Christian chapel, and the crucifix and inscriptions added after its consecration. Other very respectable judges think,

think, the style of architecture is by no means pure, but adulterated by meretricious ornament, and worthy enough of the first ages of Christianity.

Mr. Addison has given many quotations from the Latin poets, in honour of this river, all of which countenance the popular opinion with regard to the quality of the water. The breed of white cattle, which gave such a reputation to the river, still remains in this country. We saw many of them as we passed, some milk white, but the greatest numbers of a whitish grey. The common people still retain the ancient opinion, with respect to the effect of the water. Spoleto, the capital of Umbria, is situated on a high rock, the ascent to which is very steep on all sides. This town retains little appearance of its ancient importance. Keysser says, that, like other paltry towns in Italy, it exhibits bombastic inscriptions concerning its antiquity, and many trivial occurrences which have happened there; the only inscription,

scription, however, which he quotes, and the only one which I saw, is that over the Porta di Fuga, from which the Carthaginian army is supposed to have been repulsed.

ANNIBAL

CÆSIS AD THRASYMENUM ROMANIS
URBEM ROMAM INFENSO AGMINE PETENS,
SPOLETO MAGNA SUORUM CLADE REPULSUS,
INSIGNI FUGA PORTÆ NOMEN FECIT.

I cannot perceive any thing bombastic in this; Livy mentions the fact in his twenty-second book, in the following terms:

Annibal recto itinere per Umbriam usque ad Spoletum venit, inde quum perpopulato agro urbem oppugnare adortus esset, cum magna cæde suorum repulsus, conjectans ex unius coloniæ haud nimis prospere tentatæ viribus quanta moles Romanæ urbis esset.

If the inhabitants of the greatest capital in the world had equal authority for their ancestors having repulsed such a general as Hannibal, would they not be inclined to

receive it as truth, and to transmit it to the latest posterity?

This town is still supplied with water, by means of an antique aqueduct, one of the most entire, and the highest in Europe. In the centre, where the height is greatest, there is a double arcade; the other arches diminish in height, as they recede from it, towards the sloping sides of the two mountains which this magnificent work unites.

In the cathedral, there is a picture of the Virgin by St. Luke; but we had already seen sufficient specimens of this saint's abilities, as a sculptor and a painter, and we had not the least curiosity to see any more.

LETTER XXXV.

Rome.

LEAVING Spoleto, we passed over the highest of the Apennines, and then descended through a forest of olive trees, to the fruitful valley in which Terni is situated, on the river Nera. It was formerly called Interamna, on account of its standing between two branches of that river. The valley which stretches from this town to Terni, is exuberantly fertile, being finely exposed to the south sun, and watered by the Nera, which, by its beauteous windings, divides the plain into peninsulas of various shapes. The Emperor Tacitus, and his brother Florianus, were natives of Terni; but the greatest pride of that city is, its having given birth to Tacitus the Historian.

I am almost ashamed to tell you, that we did not go to see the famous cataract, near

this town, which is usually visited by travellers, and which, by all accounts, is so worthy of their curiosity. Innumerable streams from the highest Apennines, meeting in one channel, form the river Velino, which flows placidly, for some time, through a plain almost horizontal, and afterwards, when the river becomes more rapid by the contracting and sloping of the channel, the plain terminates of a sudden in a precipice three hundred feet high, over which, the river rushing, dashes with such violence against the rocky bottom, that a vast cloud of watery smoke is raised all around. The river Velino does not long survive the fall, but broken, groaning, and foaming, soon finishes his course in the Nera. Mr. Addison is of opinion, that Virgil had this gulph in his eye when he described the place in the middle of Italy, through which the Fury Alecto descended into Tartarus.

A very heavy rain which fell while we were at Terni, the fatigue and difficulty of
4 climbing

climbing up the Monte di Marmore, from whence this fall appears to the greatest advantage, and our impatience to be at Rome, prevented us from seeing that celebrated cataract, which we regretted the less, as we had frequently seen one of the same kind in Scotland, about twelve miles above Hamilton, at a place called Corace, where the river Clyde, falling perpendicular from a vast height, produces the same effects, in every respect, unless, that he outlives the accident, and continues his course for near fifty miles before he joins the Atlantic ocean.

The distance from Terni to Narni is about seven miles; the road is uncommonly good, and the country on each side delightful. When we came near Narni, while the chaises proceeded to the town, I walked to take a view of the bridge of Augustus. This stately fabric is wholly of marble, and without cement, as many other antique buildings are. Only one of the

arches remains intire, which is the first on the side of the river where I was; under it there was no water; it is one hundred and fifty feet wide. The next arch, below which the river flows, is twenty feet wider, and has a considerable slope, being higher on the side next the first arch, than on that next the third. The remaining two arches are, in every respect, smaller than the two first. What could be the reason of such ungraceful irregularity in a work, in other respects so magnificent, and upon which so much labour and expence must have been bestowed, I cannot imagine. It is doubtful, whether there were originally four arches, or only three; for that which is supposed by some to be the basis from which the two lesser arches sprung; is thought by others, to be the remains of a square pillar, raised some time after the bridge was built, to support the middle of the third arch; which, on the supposition that there were but three, must have been of a very extraordinary width.

This fabric is usually called Augustus's Bridge, and Mr. Addison thinks that without doubt Martial alludes to it, in the ninety-second Epigram of the seventh book; but some other very judicious travellers imagine, it is the remains of an aqueduct, because those arches joined two mountains, and are infinitely higher than was necessary for a bridge over the little river which flows under them. It has also been supposed, not without great appearance of probability, that this fabric was originally intended to serve the purposes of both.

As the rain still continued, my curiosity to see this fine ruin procured me a severe drenching: this I received with due resignation, as a punishment for having been intimidated by rain, from visiting the fine cascade at Terni. It was with great difficulty I got up the hill, by a path which I thought was shorter and easier than the high road; this unfortunately led to no

gate. At last, however, I observed a broken part of the wall, over which I immediately clambered into the town. Martial takes notice of the difficulty of access to this town.

*Narnia, sulphureo quam gurgite candidus amnis
Circuit, ancipiti vix adeunda Jugo.*

The town itself is very poor, and thinly inhabited. It boasts, however, of being the native city of the Emperor Nerva, and some other celebrated men.

The road from Narni to the post-house at Otricoli, is exceeding rough and mountainous. This is a very poor village, but advantageously situated on a rising ground. Between this and the Tiber, at some little distance from the road, there is a considerable tract of ground, covered with many loose antique fragments and vaults: these are generally considered as the ruins of the ancient Otriculum. We passed along this road early in the morning, and were entertained, great part of the way, with vocal
music

music from the pilgrims, several hordes of whom we met near this place, on their return from Rome, where they had been on account of the jubilee.

The only place of note between Otricoli and Rome, is Civita Castellana. Terni is the last town of the province of Umbria, and Castellana the first of ancient Latium, coming to Rome by the Flaminian way. Castellana is considered, by many antiquarians, as the Fescennium of the ancients; a schoolmaster of which, as we are informed by Livy, by an unexampled instance of wickedness, betrayed a number of the sons of the principal citizens into the power of the Dictator Camillus, at that time besieging the place. The generous Roman, equally abhorring the treachery and the traitor, ordered this base man to be stripped, to have his hands tied behind, and to be delivered over to the boys, who, armed with rods, beat him back to Fescennium, and delivered him up to their parents, to be used as they should think he deserved.

Civita

Civita Castellana stands upon a high rock, and must formerly have been a place of great strength, but is now in no very flourishing condition. Many of the towns I have mentioned, lying on the road to Rome, by the Flaminian way, have suffered, at different periods, more than those of any other part of Italy ; by the inroads of Visigoths and Huns, as well as by some incursions of a later date.

This, I am convinced, is the only country in the world, where the fields become more desolate as you approach the capital. After having traversed the cultivated and fertile vallies of Umbria, one is affected with double emotion at beholding the deplorable state of poor neglected Latium. For several posts before you arrive at Rome, few villages, little cultivation, and scarcely any inhabitants, are to be seen. In the Campania of Rome, formerly the best cultivated and best peopled spot in the world, no houses, no trees, no inclosures ;
nothing

nothing but the scattered ruins of temples and tombs, presenting the idea of a country depopulated by a pestilence. All is motionless, silent, and forlorn.

In the midst of these deserted fields the ancient Mistress of the World rears her head, in melancholy majesty.

LETTER XXXVI.

Rome.

YOU will not be surpris'd at my silence for some weeks past. On arriving at a place where there are so many interesting objects as at Rome, we are generally selfish enough to indulge our own curiosity very amply, before we gratify that of our friends in any degree. My first care was to wait on the Prince Guistiniani, for whom we had letters from Count Mahoni, the Spanish ambassador at Vienna, to whose niece that Prince is married. Nothing can exceed the politeness and attention the Prince and Princess have shewn. He waited immediately on the D— of H—, and insisted on taking us, in his own carriage, to every house of distinction. Two or three hours a day were spent in this ceremony. After being once presented,

no

no farther introduction or invitation is necessary.

Our mornings are generally spent in visiting the antiquities, and the paintings in the palaces. On those occasions we are accompanied by Mr. Byres, a gentleman of probity, knowledge, and real taste. We generally pass two or three hours every evening at the *conversazioni*; I speak in the plural number, for we are sometimes at several in the same evening. It frequently happens, that three or four, or more, of the nobility, have these assemblies at the same time; and almost all the company of a certain rank in Rome make it a point, if they go to any, to go to all; so that, although there is a great deal of bustle, and a continual change of place, there is scarcely any change of company, or any variation in the amusement, except what the change of place occasions: but this circumstance alone is often found an useful accomplice in the murder of a tedious evening;

evening; for when the company find no great amusement in one place, they fly to another, in hopes they may be better entertained. These hopes are generally disappointed; but that does not prevent them from trying a third, and a fourth; and although to whatever length the experiment is pushed, it always terminates in new disappointments, yet, at last, the evening is dispatched; and, without this locomotive resource, I have seen people in danger of dispatching themselves. This bustle, and running about after objects which give no permanent satisfaction, and without fully knowing whence we came, or whither we are going, you'll say, is a mighty silly business. It is so;—and, after all the swelling importance that some people assume, Pray what is human life?

Having told you what five or six conversazions are, I shall endeavour to give you some idea what *one* is. These assemblies are always in the principal apartment
of

of the palace, which is generally on the second, but sometimes on the third floor. It is not always perfectly easy to find this apartment, because it sometimes happens that the staircase is very ill lighted. On entering the hall, where the footmen of the company are assembled, your name is pronounced aloud, by some servants of the family, and repeated by others, as you walk through several rooms. Those whose names are not known, are announced by the general denomination of *i Cavalieri Forestieri*, or *Ingleſi*, as you paſs through the different rooms, till you come to that in which the company are assembled, where you are received by the maſter or miſtreſs of the houſe, who ſits exactly within the door for that purpoſe. Having made a ſhort compliment there, you mix with the company, which is ſometimes ſo large, that none but the ladies can have the convenience of ſitting. Notwithſtanding the great ſize and number of the rooms in the Italian palaces, it frequently happens
that

that the company are so pressed together, that you can with difficulty move from one room to another. There always is a greater number of men than women; no lady comes without a gentleman to hand her. This gentleman, who acts the part of Cavaliero Servente, may be her relation in any degree, or her lover, or both. It is allowed him to be connected with her in any way but one—he must not be her husband. Familiarities between man and wife are still connived at in this country however, provided they are carried on in private; but for a man to be seen hand in hand with his wife, in public, would not be tolerated.

At Cardinal Berni's assembly, which is usually more crowded than any in Rome, the company are served with coffee, lemonade, and iced confections of various kinds; but this custom is not universal. In short, at a conversatione, you have an opportunity of seeing a number of well-dressed people, you speak
a few

a few words to those you are acquainted with, you bow to the rest, and enjoy the happiness of being squeezed and pressed among the best company in Rome. I do not know what more can be said of these assemblies; only it may be necessary, to prevent mistakes, to add, that a *conversazione* is a place where there is no conversation. They break up about nine o'clock, all but a small select company, who are invited to supper. But the present race of Romans are by no means so fond of convivial entertainments, as their predecessors. The magnificence of the Roman nobility displays itself now in other articles than the luxuries of the table: they generally dine at home, in a very private manner. Strangers are seldom invited to dinner, except by the foreign ambassadors. The hospitality of Cardinal Bernis alone makes up for every deficiency of that nature. There is no ambassador from the Court of Great Britain at Rome, but the English feel no want of one. If the

French Cardinal had been instructed by his court to be peculiarly attentive to them, he could not be more so than he is. Nothing can exceed the elegant magnificence of his table, nor the splendid hospitality in which he lives. Years have not impaired the wit and vivacity for which he was distinguished in his youth; and no man could support the pretensions of the French nation to superior politeness, better than their ambassador at Rome.

There are no lamps lighted in the streets at night; and all Rome would be in utter darkness, were it not for the candles, which the devotion of individuals sometimes place before certain statues of the Virgin. Those appear faintly glimmering at vast intervals, like stars in a cloudy night. The lackeys carry dark lanthorns behind the carriages of people of the first distinction. The Cardinals, and other Ecclesiastics, do not choose to have their coaches seen before the door of every house they visit. In the midst

midst of this darkness, you will naturally conclude, that amorous assignations in the streets are not unfrequent among the inferior people. When a carriage, with a lanthorn behind it, accidentally comes near a couple who do not wish to be known, one of them calls out, "Volti la lanterna," and is obeyed; the carriage passing without farther notice being taken. Venus, as you know, has always been particularly respected at Rome, on account of her amour with Anchises.

Genus unde Latinum

Albanique patres, atque alta mœnia Romæ.

The Italians, in general, have a remarkable air of gravity, which they preserve even when the subject of their conversation is gay. I observed something of this at Venice, but I think it is much stronger at Rome. The Roman ladies have a languor in their countenances, which promises as much sensibility as the brisk look of the French; and, without the volubility of

the latter, or the frankness of the Venetian women, they seem no way averse to form connections with strangers. The D— of H— was presented to a beautiful young Lady at one of the assemblies. In the course of conversation he happened to say, That he had heard she had been married very lately. She answered, with precipitation, “Signor si—ma mio marito è uno “Vecchio.” She then added, shaking her head, and in a most affecting tone of voice, “O santissima Virgine quanto è Vecchio!”

LETTER XXXVII.

Rome.

AUTHORS differ very much in opinion with respect to the number of inhabitants which Rome contained at the period when it was most populous. Some accounts make them seven millions, and others a still greater number. These seem all to be incredible exaggerations. It is not probable, that what is properly called the city of Rome, ever extended beyond the wall built by Belisarius, after he had defeated the Goths. This wall has been frequently repaired since, and is still standing; it is about thirteen or fourteen miles in circuit, which is nearly the size that Rome was of, according to Pliny, in the days of Vespasian. Those who assert, that the number of inhabitants in ancient Rome, when it was most populous, could not exceed a million, exclusive of slaves, are

thought moderate in their calculation; but when we consider that the circumference of thirteen or fourteen miles is not equal to that of either Paris or London; that the Campus Martius, which is the best built part of modern Rome, was a field, without a house upon it, anciently; and that the rising ground, where St. Peter's church and the Vatican stand, was no part of old Rome; it will be difficult to conceive that ever Rome could boast a million of inhabitants. For my own part, if the wall of Belisarius is admitted as the boundary of the ancient city, I cannot imagine it to have, at any time, contained above five or six hundred thousand, without supposing the masters of the world to have been the worst lodged people in it.

But if, in the computations above mentioned, the suburbs are included; if those who lived without the walls are considered as inhabitants; in that case there will be room enough for any number, the limits of the suburbs not being ascertained.

The

The buildings immediately without the walls of Rome, which were connectedly continued so as to merit the name of suburbs, were certainly of vast extent; and with those of the town itself, must have contained a prodigious number of people. By a calculation made by Mr. Byres, the Circus Maximus was of sufficient size to accommodate three hundred and eighty thousand spectators; and we are told by the Latin poets, that it was usually full. Now if allowance is made for the superannuated, the sick, and infirm; also for children, and those employed in their private business, and for slaves, who were not permitted to remain in the Circus during the games; Mr. Byres imagines that such a number as three hundred and eighty thousand spectators could not be supplied by a city and suburbs the number of whose inhabitants were much under three millions.

Whatever may have been the extent of the suburbs of Rome, it is probable they were only formed of ordinary houses, and inhabited by people of inferior rank. There are no remains of palaces, or magnificent buildings of any kind, to be now seen near the walls, or indeed over the whole Campania; yet it is asserted by some authors, that this wide surface was peopled, at one period, like a continued village; and we are told of strangers, who, viewing this immense plain covered with houses, imagined they had already entered Rome, when they were thirty miles from the walls of that city.

Some of the seven hills on which Rome was built, appear now but gentle swellings, owing to the intervals between them being greatly raised by the rubbish of ruined houses. Some have hardly houses of any kind upon them, being entirely laid out in gardens and vineyards. It is generally thought,

thought, that two-thirds of the surface within the walls are in this situation, or covered with ruins; and, by the information I have the greatest reliance on, the number of the inhabitants at present is about one hundred and seventy thousand, which, though greatly inferior to what Rome contained in the days of its ancient power, is more than it has been, for the most part, able to boast since the fall of the Empire. There is good authority for believing that this city, at particular periods since that time, some of them not very remote, has been reduced to between thirty and forty thousand inhabitants. The numbers have gradually increased during the whole of this century. As it was much less expensive to purchase new ground for building upon, than to clear any ruins which, by time, had acquired the consistence of rock, great part of the modern city is built on what was the ancient Campus Martius.

Some

Some of the principal streets are of considerable length, and perfectly straight. That called the Corso, is the most frequented. It runs from the Porto del Popolo, along the side of the Campus Martius, next to the ancient city. Here the nobility display their equipages during the carnival, and take the air in the evenings in fine weather. It is indeed the great scene of Roman magnificence and amusement.

The shops on each side, are three or four feet higher than the street; and there is a path for the conveniency of foot passengers, on a level with the shops. The palaces, of which there are several in this street, range in a line with the houses, having no court before them, as the hotels in Paris have; and not being shut up from the sight of the citizens by high gloomy walls, as Devonshire and Burlington houses in London are. Such dismal barricades are more suitable to the unsocial character of a
proud

proud Baron, in the days of aristocratic tyranny, than to the hospitable benevolent disposition of their present proprietor.

The Corso, I have said, commences at the fine area immediately within the Porto del Popolo. This is the gate by which we entered Rome; it is built in a noble style of elegant simplicity, from the design of Michael Angelo, executed by Bernini.

The Strada Felice, in the higher part of the city, is about a mile and a half in length from the Trinità del Monte, to the church of St. John Lateran, on the Pincian hill. This street runs in a straight line, but the view is interrupted by a fine church called St. Maria Maggiore. The Strada Felice is crossed by another straight street, called the Strada di Porta Pia, terminated at one end by that gate; and at the other by four colossal statues in white marble, of two horses led by two men; supposed by some, to be representations of Alexander taming Bucephalus; and according to others,

of

of Castor and Pollux. They are placed before the Pope's palace, on the Quirinal Hill, and have a noble effect.

It would be more difficult to convey an idea of the smaller and less regular streets. I shall therefore only observe, in general, that Rome at present exhibits a strange mixture of magnificent and interesting, common and beggarly objects; the former consists of palaces, churches, fountains, and above all, the remains of antiquity. The latter comprehend all the rest of the city. The church of St. Peter's, in the opinion of many, surpasses, in size and magnificence, the finest monuments of ancient architecture. The Grecian and Roman temples were more distinguished for the elegance of their form, than their magnitude. The Pantheon, which was erected to all the Gods, is the most entire antique temple in Rome. It is said, that Michael Angelo, to confirm the triumph of modern over ancient architecture, made

the dome of St. Peter's of the same diameter with the Pantheon; raising the immense fabric upon four pilasters; whereas the whole circle of the rotunda rests upon the ground. This great artist, perhaps, was delighted with the idea of being thought as superior to the ancient architects, as he was conscious of being inferior to some of the sculptors of antiquity.

All who have seen St. Paul's in London may, by an enlargement of its dimensions, form some idea of the external appearance of St. Peter's. But the resemblance fails entirely on comparing them within; St. Peter's being lined, in many parts, with the most precious and beautiful marble, adorned with valuable pictures, and all the powers of sculpture.

The approach to St. Peter's church exceeds that to St. Paul's in a still greater proportion, than the former surpasses the latter either in size, or in the richness and beauty of the internal ornaments. A magnificent

nificent portico advances on each side from the front, by which means a square court is formed immediately before the steps which lead into the church. The two porticoes form two sides of the square, the third is closed by the front of the church, and the fourth is open. A colonnade, four columns deep, commences at the extremities of the porticoes; and embracing, in an oval direction, a space far wider than the square, forms the most magnificent area that perhaps ever was seen before any building. This oval colonnade is crowned with a balustrade, ornamented by a great number of statues; and consists of above three hundred large pillars, forming three separate walks, which lead to the advanced portico, and from that into the church. In the middle of the immense area, stands an Egyptian obelisk of granite; and to the right and left of this, two very beautiful fountains refresh the atmosphere with streams of clear water. The delighted eye glancing over these splendid objects, would

rest

rest with complete satisfaction on the stupendous fabric to which they serve as embellishments, if the façade of this celebrated church had been equal in beauty and elegance to the rest of the building. But this is by no means the case, and every impartial judge must acknowledge, that the front of St. Peter's is, in those particulars, inferior to that of our St. Paul's.

The length of St. Peter's, taken on the outside, is exactly seven hundred and thirty feet; the breadth five hundred and twenty; and the height, from the pavement to the top of the cross, which crowns the cupola, four hundred and fifty. The grand portico before the entrance, is two hundred and sixteen feet in length, and forty in breadth.

It is usual to desire strangers, on their first entering this church, to guess at the size of the objects, which, on account of the distance, always seem less than they are in reality. The statues of the Angels, in particular, which support the founts of holy water,

water, when viewed from the door, seem no bigger than children; but when you approach nearer, you perceive they are six feet high. We make no such mistake on seeing a living man at the same, or a greater distance; because the knowledge we have of a man's real size precludes the possibility of our being mistaken, and we make allowance for the diminution which distance occasions; but Angels, and other figures in sculpture, having no determined standard, but being under the arbitrary will of the statuary, who gives them the bulk of giants or dwarfs as best suits his purpose, we do not know what allowance to make; and the eye, unused to such large masses, is confounded, and incapacitated from forming a right judgment of an object six feet high, or of any other dimensions, which it was not previously acquainted with.

It is not my design to attempt a description of the statues, basso relievos, columns, pictures, and various ornaments of this church;
such

Such an account, faithfully executed, would fill volumes. The finest of all the ornaments have a probability of being longer preserved than would once have been imagined, by the astonishing improvements which have of late been made in the art of copying pictures in Mosaic. Some of the artists here, have already made copies with a degree of accuracy, which nobody could believe who had not seen the performances. By this means, the works of Raphael, and other great painters, will be transmitted to a later posterity than they themselves expected; and although all the beauty of the originals cannot be retained in the copy, it would be gross affectation to deny that a great part of it is. How happy would it make the real lovers of the art in this age, to have such specimens of the genius of Zeuxis, Apelles, and other ancient painters!

It has been frequently remarked, that the proportions of this church are so fine,

and the symmetry of its different parts so exquisite, that the whole seems considerably smaller than it really is. It was, however, certainly intended to appear a great and sublime object, and to produce admiration by the vastness of its dimensions. I cannot, therefore, be of opinion, that any thing which has a tendency to defeat this effect, can with propriety be called an excellence. I should on the contrary imagine, that if the architect could have made the church appear larger than it is in reality, this would have been a more desirable effect; provided it could have been produced without diminishing our admiration in some more material point. If this could not be accomplished; if it is absolutely certain, that those proportions in architecture, which produce the most beautiful effect on the whole, always make a building seem smaller than it is; this ought rather to be mentioned as an unfortunate than as a fortunate circumstance. The more I reflect on this, it appears to me the more certain, that

that no system of proportions, which has the effect of making a large building appear small, is *therefore* excellent. If the property of reducing great things to little ones is inherent in all harmonious proportions; it is, in my opinion, an imperfection, and much to be lamented. In small buildings, where we expect to derive our pleasure from grace and elegance, the evil may be borne; but in edifices of vast dimensions, capable of sublimity from their bulk, the vice of diminishing is not to be compensated by harmony. The sublime has no equivalent.

LETTER XXXVIII.

Rome.

THE grand procession of the Possesso took place a few days ago. This is a ceremony performed by every Pope, as soon as conveniency will permit, after the Conclave has declared in his favour. It is equivalent to the coronation in England, or the consecration at Rheims. On this occasion, the Pope goes to the Basilica of St. John Lateran, and, as the phrase is, takes possession of it. This church, they tell you, is the most ancient of all the churches in Rome, and the mother of all the churches in christendom. When he has got possession of this, therefore, he *must* be the real head of the Christian church, and Christ's vicerent upon earth. From St. John Lateran's, he proceeds to the Capitol, and receives the keys of that fortress; after which, it is equally clear, that as an earth-

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ly prince, he ought, like the ancient possessors of the Capitol, to have a supremacy over all kings.

The Prince Guistiniani procured a place for us, at the Senator's house in the Capitol, from whence we might see the procession to the greatest advantage. On arriving, we were surprised to find the main body of the Palace, as well as the Palazzo dé Conservatori, and the Museum, which form the two wings, all hung with crimson silk, laced with gold. The bases and capitals of the pillars and pilasters, where the silk could not be accurately applied, were gilt. Only imagine, what a figure the Farnesian Hercules would make, dressed in a silk suit, like a French petit-maitre. To cover the noble simplicity of Michael Angelo's architecture with such frippery by way of ornament, is, in my mind, a piece of refinement equally laudable.

Throwing an eye on the Pantheon, and comparing it with the Campidoglio in its

present dress, the beauty and justness of the following lines seemed more striking than ever.

Mark, how the dread Pantheon stands,

Amid the domes of modern hands,

Amid the toys of idle state,

How simply, how severely great!

We were led to a balcony, where a number of ladies of the first distinction in Rome were assembled. There were no men excepting a very few strangers; most part of the Roman noblemen have some function in the procession. The instant of his Holiness's departure from the Vatican, was announced by a discharge of cannon from the castle of St. Angelo; on the top of which, the standard of the church had been flying ever since morning. We had a full view of the cavalcade, on its return from the church, as it ascended to the Capitol. The officers of the Pope's horse guards were dressed in a style equally rich and becoming. It was something between

between the Hungarian and Spanish dress. I do not know whether the King of Prussia would approve of the great profusion of plumage they wore in their hats; but it is picturesque, and showy qualities are the most essential to the guards of his Holiness. The Swiss guards were, on this occasion, dressed with less propriety; their uniforms were real coats of mail, with iron helmets on their heads, as if they had been to take the Capitol by storm, and expected a vigorous resistance. Their appearance was strongly contrasted with that of the Roman Barons, who were on horseback, without boots, and in full dress; each of them was preceded by four pages, their hair hanging in regular ringlets to the middle of their backs: they were followed by a number of servants in rich liveries. Bishops and other ecclesiastics succeeded the Barons; and then came the Cardinals on horseback, in their purple robes, which covered every part of the horses, except

the head. You may be sure that the horses employed at such ceremonies are the gentlest that can be found; for if they were at all unruly, they might not only injure the surrounding crowd, but throw their Eminencies, who are not celebrated for their skill in horsemanship. Last of all comes the Pope himself, mounted on a milk white mule, distributing blessings with an unsparing hand among the multitude, who follow him with acclamations of Viva il Santo Padre, and, prostrating themselves on the ground before his mule, Benedizione Santo Padre. The Holy Father took particular care to wave his hand in the form of the cross, that the blessings he pronounced at the same instant might have the greater efficacy. As his Holiness is employed in this manner during the whole procession, he cannot be supposed to give the least attention to his mule, the bridle of which is held by two persons who walk by his side, with some others,

others, to catch the *infallible* Father of the Church, and prevent his being thrown to the ground, in case the mule should stumble.

At the entrance of the Capitol he was met by the Senator of Rome, who, falling on his knees, delivered the keys into the hands of his Holiness, who pronounced a blessing over him, and restored him the keys. Proceeding from the Capitol, the Pope was met by a deputation of Jews, soon after he had passed through the Arch of Titus. They were headed by the chief Rabbi, who presented him with a long scroll of parchment, on which is written the whole law of Moses in Hebrew. His Holiness received the parchment in a very gracious manner, telling the Rabbi at the same time, that he accepted his present out of respect to the law itself, but entirely rejected his interpretation; for the ancient law, having been fulfilled by the coming of
the

the Messiah, was no longer in force. As this was not a convenient time or place for the Rabbi to enter into a controversy upon the subject, he bowed his head in silence, and retired with his countrymen, in the full conviction, that the falsehood of the Pope's assertion would be made manifest to the whole universe in due time. His Holiness, mean while, proceeded in triumph, through the principal streets, to the Vatican.

This procession, I am told, is one of the most showy and magnificent which takes place, on any occasion, in this city; where there are certainly more solemn exhibitions of the same kind than in any other country; yet, on the whole, I own it did not afford me much satisfaction; nor could all their pomp and finery prevent an uneasy recollection, not unmixed with sentiments of indignation, from obtruding on my mind. To feel unmixed admiration in beholding

holding the Pope and his Cardinals marching in triumph to the Capitol, one must forget those who walked in triumph formerly to the same place; forget entirely that such men as Camillus, Scipio, Paulus Æmilius, and Pompey, ever existed; they must forget Cato, whose campaign in Africa was so much admired by Lucan, that he declares, he would rather have had the glory of that single campaign than Pompey's three triumphs, and all the honour he obtained by finishing the Jugurthan war.

Hunc ego per Syrtes, Libyæque extrema
triumphum

Ducere maluerim, quam ter Capitolia curru
Scandere Pompeii, quam frangere colla Jugurthæ.

We must forget Caius Cassius, Marcus Brutus, and all the great and virtuous men of ancient Rome, whom we have admired from our childhood, and of whose great qualities our admiration increases with our experience and knowledge of the present
race

race of mankind. To be in the Capitol, and not think and speak of the worthies of the ancient Republic, is almost impossible.

Quis te magne Cato tacitum; aut te Cosse
relinquat?

Quis Gracchi genus? aut geminos, duo fulmina
belli,
Scipiadas, &c. &c.

LETTER XXXIX.

Rome.

HAVING said so much of St. Peter's, unquestionably the finest piece of modern architecture in Rome, allow me to mention some of the best specimens of the ancient. I shall begin with the Pantheon, which, though not the largest of the Roman temples, is the most perfect which now remains. The Temple of Jupiter Capitolinus, and the Temple of Peace, if we may trust to the accounts we have of the first, and to the ruins of the second, in the Campo Vaccino, were both much larger than the Pantheon. In spite of the depredations which this last has sustained from Goths, Vandals, and Popes, it still remains a beauteous monument of Roman taste. The pavilion of the great altar, which stands under the cupola in St. Peter's, and the four wreathed pillars

pillars of Corinthian brass which support it, were formed out of the spoils of the Pantheon, which, after all, and with the weight of eighteen hundred years upon its head, has still a probability of outliving its proud rapacious rival. From the round form of this temple, it has obtained the name of Rotunda. Its height is a hundred and fifty feet, and its diameter nearly the same. Within, it is divided into eight parts; the gate at which you enter forming one: the other seven compartments, if they may be so called, are each of them distinguished by two fluted Corinthian pillars, and as many pilasters of Giallo Antico. The capitals and bases are of white marble; these support a circular entablature. The wall is perpendicular for half the height of the temple; it then slopes forward as it ascends, the circumference gradually diminishing, till it terminates in an opening of about twenty-five feet diameter. There are no windows; the central opening in the vault admitting a sufficiency

sufficiency of light, has a much finer effect than windows could have had. No great inconveniency can happen from this opening. The conical form of the temple prevents the rain from falling near the walls where the altars now are, and where the statues of the Gods were formerly placed. The rain which falls in the middle immediately drills through holes which perforate a large piece of porphyry that forms the centre of the pavement, the whole of which consists of various pieces of marble, agate, and other materials, which have been picked up from the ruins, and now compose a singular kind of Mosaic work.

The portico was added by Marcus Agrippa, the son-in-law of Augustus. It is supported by sixteen pillars of granite, five feet in diameter, and of a single piece each. Upon the frieze, in the front, is the following inscription in large capitals:

M. AGRIPPA L. F. CONSUL TERTIUM FECIT.

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Some

Some are of opinion, that the Pantheon is much more ancient than the Augustan age, and that the portico, which is the only part those antiquarians admit to be the work of Agrippa, though beautiful in itself, does not correspond with the simplicity of the temple.

As the Pantheon is the most entire, the Amphitheatre of Vespasian is the most stupendous, monument of antiquity in Rome. It was finished by his son Titus, and obtained the name of Colosseum, afterwards corrupted into Coliseum, from a colossal statue of Apollo which was placed before it. This vast structure was built of Tiburtine stone, which is remarkably durable. If the public buildings of the ancient Romans had met with no more inveterate enemy than Time, we might, at this day, contemplate the greater number in all their original perfection; they were formed for the admiration of much remoter ages than the present. This Amphitheatre in particular might have stood

flood entire for two thousand years to come: For what are the slow corrosions of time, in comparison of the rapid destruction from the fury of Barbarians, the zeal of Bigots, and the avarice of Popes and Cardinals? The first depredation made on this stupendous building, was by the inhabitants of Rome themselves, at that time greater Goths than their conqueror. We are told, they applied to Theodoric, whose court was then at Ravenna, for liberty to take the stones of this Amphitheatre for some public work they were carrying on. The marble cornices, the friezes, and other ornaments of this building, have been carried away, at various times, to adorn palaces; and the stones have been taken to build churches, and sometimes to repair the walls of Rome, the most useless work of all. For of what importance are walls to a city, without a garrison, and whose most powerful artillery affects not the bodies, but only the minds, of men? About one-half of the external circuit still remains, from which,

and the ruins of the other parts, a pretty exact idea may be formed of the original structure. By a computation made by Mr. Byres, it could contain eighty-five thousand spectators, making a convenient allowance for each. Fourteen chapels are now erected within side, representing the stages of our Saviour's passion. This expedient of consecrating them into Christian chapels and churches, has saved some of the finest remains of Heathen magnificence from utter destruction.

Our admiration of the Romans is tempered with horror, when we reflect on the use formerly made of this immense building, and the dreadful scenes which were acted on the Arena; where not only criminals condemned to death, but also prisoners taken in war, were obliged to butcher each other, for the entertainment of an inhuman populace. The combats of Gladiators were at first used in Rome at funerals only, where prisoners were obliged to

to assume that profession, and fight before the tombs of deceased Generals or Magistrates, in imitation of the barbarous custom of the Greeks, of sacrificing captives at the tombs of their heroes.

This horrid piece of magnificence, which, at first, was exhibited only on the death of Consuls, and men of the highest distinction, came gradually to be claimed by every citizen who was sufficiently rich to defray the expence; and as the people's fondness for these combats increased every day, they were no longer confined to funeral solemnities, but became customary on days of public rejoicing, and were exhibited, at amazing expence, by some Generals after victories. In the progress of riches, luxury, and vice, it became a profession in Rome to deal in gladiators. Men called Lanistæ made it their business to purchase prisoners and slaves, to have them instructed in the use of the various weapons; and when any Roman chose to amuse the

people with their favourite show, or to entertain a select company of his own friends upon any particular occasion, he applied to the Lanistæ; who, for a fixed price, furnished him with as many pairs of those unhappy combatants as he required. They had various names given to them, according to the different manner in which they were armed. Towards the end of the republic, some of the rich and powerful citizens had great numbers of gladiators of their own, who were daily exercised by the Lanistæ, and always kept ready for fighting when ordered by their proprietor. Those who were often victorious, or had the good fortune to please their masters, had their liberty granted them, on which they generally quitted their profession; though it sometimes happened, that those who were remarkably skilful, continued it, either from vanity or poverty, even after they had obtained their freedom; and the applause bestowed on those gladiators, had the effect of inducing men born free, to

choose this for a profession, which they exercised for money, till age impaired their strength and address. They then hung up their arms in the temple of Hercules, and appeared no more on the Arena.

————— Veianius armis
Herculis ad postem fixis latet abditus agro,
Ne populum extrema toties exoret Arena.

There were many Amphitheatres at Rome, in other towns of Italy, and in many provinces of the empire; but this of Vespasian was the largest that ever was built. That at Verona is the next in size in Italy, and the remains of the Amphitheatre at Nimes, in the south of France, prove, that it was the most magnificent structure of this kind in any of the Roman provinces. The Romans were so excessively fond of these exhibitions, that wherever colonies were established, it was found requisite to give public shews of this kind, to induce the emigrants to remain in their new country; and in the provinces where

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it was thought necessary that a considerable body of troops should remain constantly, structures of this kind were erected, at vast labour and expence, and were found the best means of inducing the young officers to submit cheerfully to a long absence from the capital, and of preventing the common soldiers from desertion. The profusion of human blood, which was shed in the Arena, by the cruel prodigality of the Emperors, and the refinements which were invented to augment the barbarous pleasure of the spectators, are proofs of the dreadful degree of corruption and depravity to which human nature is capable of attaining, even among a learned and enlightened people, when unrestrained by the mild precepts of a benevolent religion. We are told, that the gladiators bred for the use of particular patricians, as well as those kept for hire by the Lanistæ, were, for some weeks before they appeared in the Arena, fed upon such succulent diet, as would soonest fill their veins, that they
might

might bleed freely at every wound. They were instructed by the Lanistæ, not only in the art of fighting, but also in the most graceful manner of dying; and when those wretched men felt themselves mortally wounded, they assumed such attitudes as they knew pleased the beholders; and they seemed to receive pleasure themselves from the applause bestowed upon them in their last moments.

When a gladiator was thrown by his antagonist to the ground, and directly laid down his arms, it was a sign that he could resist no longer, and declared himself vanquished; but still his life depended on the spectators. If they were pleased with his performance, or, in a merciful disposition, they held up their hands, with the thumb folded down, and the life of the man was spared; but if they were in the humour to see him die, they held up the hand clenched, with the thumb only erect. As soon as the prostrate victim

beheld that fatal signal, he knew all hopes of life were vain, and immediately presented his breast to the sword of his adversary, who, whatever his own inclinations might be, was obliged to put him to death instantly.

As these combats formed the supreme pleasure of the inhabitants of Rome, the most cruel of their Emperors were sometimes the most popular; merely because they gratified the people, without restraint, in their favourite amusement. When Marcus Aurelius thought it necessary, for the public service, to recruit his army from the gladiators of Rome; it raised more discontent among the populace, than many of the wildest pranks of Caligula. In the times of some of the Emperors, the lower class of Roman citizens were certainly as worthless a set of men as ever existed; stained with all the vices which arise from idleness and dependence; living upon the largesses of the great; passing their whole time in the Circus and
Amphi-

Amphitheatres, where every sentiment of humanity was annihilated within their breasts, and where the agonies and torments of their fellow-creatures were their chief pastime. That no occasion might be lost of indulging this savage taste of the populace, criminals were condemned to fight with wild beasts in the Arena, or were exposed, unarmed, to be torn in pieces by them; at other times, they were blindfolded, and in that condition obliged to cut and slaughter each other. So that, instead of victims solemnly sacrificed to public justice, they seemed to be brought in as buffoons to raise the mirth of the spectators.

The practice of domestic slavery had also a great influence in rendering the Romans of a cruel and haughty character. Masters could punish their slaves in what manner, and to what degree, they thought proper. It was as late as the Emperor Adrian's time, before any law was made, ordaining that a master who should put his slave to death

death without sufficient cause, should be tried for his life. The usual porter at the gate of a great man's house in ancient Rome, was a chained slave. The noise of whips and lashes resounded from one house to another, at the time when it was customary for the masters of families to take an account of the conduct of their servants. This cruel disposition, as is the case wherever domestic slavery prevails, extended to the gentle sex, and hardened the mild tempers of the women. What a picture has Juvenal drawn of the toilet of a Roman lady!

Nam si constituit, solitoque decentius optat

Ornari——

Componit crinem laceratis ipsa capillis,

Nuda humeros Psecas infelix, nudisque mamillis,

Altior hic quare cincinnus? Taurea punit.

Continuo flexi crimen facinusque capilli.

It was customary for avaricious masters, to send their infirm and sick slaves, to an island in the Tiber, where there was a Temple of Æsculapius; if the God pleased

to recover them, the master took them back to his family; if they died, no farther inquiry was made about them. The Emperor Claudius put a check to this piece of inhumanity, by ordaining, that every sick slave, thus abandoned by his master, should be declared free when he recovered his health.

From these observations, are we to infer, that the ancient Romans were *naturally* of a more cruel turn of mind, than the present inhabitants of Europe? Or is there not reason to believe that, in the same circumstances, modern nations would act in the same manner? Do we not perceive, that the practice of domestic slavery has, at this day, a strong tendency to render men haughty, capricious, and cruel. Such, I am afraid, is the nature of man, that if he has power without controul, he will use it without justice; absolute power has a strong tendency to make good men bad, and never fails to make bad men worse.

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It was an observation of the late Mareschal Saxe, that in all the contests between the army waggoners and their horses, the waggoners were in the wrong ; which he imputed to their having absolute authority over the horses. In the qualities of the head and heart, and in most other respects, he thought the men and horses on an equality. Caprice is a vice of the temper, which increases faster than any other by indulgence ; it often spoils the best qualities of the heart, and, in particular situations, degenerates into the most unsufferable tyranny. The first appearance of it in young minds ought to be opposed with firmness, and prevented from farther progress, otherwise our future attempts to arrest it may be fruitless ; for

Mobilitate viget, viresque acquirit eundo.

The combats in the Amphitheatres were, as I have already said, introduced by degrees at Rome. The custom of making prisoners fight around the funeral piles of deceased

deceased heroes, was a refinement on a more barbarous practice ; and the Romans, no doubt, valued themselves on their humanity, in not butchering their prisoners in cold blood, as was the custom in the earliest ages of Greece. The institution of obliging criminals to fight in the Arena, and thus giving them a chance for their lives, would also appear to them a very merciful improvement on the common manner of execution. The grossest sophistry will pass on men's understandings, when it is used in support of measures to which they are already inclined. And when we consider the eagerness with which the populace of every country behold the accidental combats which occur in the streets, we need not be surprised to find, that when once the combats of gladiators were permitted among the Roman populace, on whatever pretext, the taste for them would daily increase, till it erased every idea of compunction from their breasts, and became their ruling passion. The Patricians, enriched

enriched by the pillage of kingdoms, and knowing that their power at Rome, and consequently all over the world, depended on the favour and suffrages of the people, naturally sought popularity by gratifying their favourite taste. Afterwards the Emperors might imagine, that such shows would keep the citizens from reflecting on their lost liberties, or the enormities of the new form of government; and, exclusive of every political reason, many of them, from the barbarous disposition of their own minds, would take as much pleasure in the scenes acted on the Arena, as the most savage of the vulgar.

While we express horror and indignation at the fondness which the Romans displayed for the bloody combats of the Amphitheatre, let us reflect, whether this proceeded from any peculiar cruelty of disposition inherent in that people, or belongs to mankind in general; let us reflect, whether it is probable, that the people of any other
nation

nation would not be gradually led, by the same degrees, to an equal passion for such horrid entertainments. Let us consider, whether there is reason to suspect that those who arm cocks with steel, and take pleasure in beholding the spirited little animals cut one another to death, would not take the same, or superior delight, in obliging men to slaughter each other if they had the power.—And what restrains them? Is there no reason to believe, that the influence of a purer religion, and brighter example, than were known to the Heathen world, prevents mankind from those enormities *now*, which were permitted and countenanced formerly? As soon as the benevolent precepts of Christianity were received by the Romans as the laws of the Deity, the prisoners and the slaves were treated with humanity, and the bloody exhibitions in the Amphitheatres were abolished.

LETTER XL.

Rome.

YOU are surpris'd that I have hitherto said nothing of the Capitol, and the Forum Romanum, which is by far the most interesting scene of antiquities in Rome. The objects worthy of attention are so numerous, and appear so confused, that it was a considerable time before I could form a tolerable distinct idea of their situation with respect to each other, though I have paid many more visits to this than any other spot since I have been in this city. Before we entered a church or palace, we ran thither with as much impatience as if the Capitol had been in danger of falling before our arrival. The approach to the modern Campidoglio is very noble, and worthy of the genius of Michael Angelo. The building itself is also the work of that great artist; it is raised on
part

part of the ruins of the ancient Capitol, and fronts St. Peter's church, with its back to the Forum and old Rome. Ascending this celebrated hill, the heart beats quick, and the mind warms with a thousand interesting ideas. You are carried back, at once, to the famous robber who first founded it. Without thinking of the waste of time which must have effaced what you are looking for, you cast about your eyes in search of the path by which the Gauls climbed up, and where they were opposed and overthrown by Manlius. You withdraw your eyes, with disdain, from every modern object, and are even displeased with the elegant structure you see before you, and contemplate, with more respect, the ruins on which it is founded; because they are more truly Roman.

The two Sphynxes of basalte, at the bottom of the ascent, though excellent specimens of Egyptian sculpture, engage little of your attention. Warm with the

glory of Rome, you cannot bestow a thought on the hieroglyphics of Egypt. At sight of the trophies erected in honour of C. Marius, all those bloody scenes acted by the fury of party and demon of revenge, during the most calamitous period of the republic, rush upon the memory ; and you regret that Time, who has spared the monuments of this fierce soldier, has destroyed the numerous trophies raised to the Fabii, the Scipio's, and other heroes, distinguished for the virtues of humanity, as well as the talents of Generals. You are struck with the colossal statues of Castor and Pollux, and, in the heat of enthusiasm, confounding the fictions of poetry with historical truth, your heart applauds their fraternal affection, and thanks them for the timely assistance they afforded the Romans in a battle with the Volsci. You rejoice at their good fortune, which, on earth, has procured them a place in the Capitol, and, in heaven, a seat by Hercules. Horace informs us, that Augustus drinks his
nectar,

nectar, reclined between them and that demigod—

Quos inter Augustus recumbens

Purpureo bibit ore nectar.

From them you move forward, and your admiration is fixed by the animated equestrian statue of Marcus Aurelius, which naturally brings to your memory that happy period, when the Roman empire was governed by a Prince who, during a long reign, made the good of his subjects the chief object of his government. You proceed to the upper end of the area; your eye is caught by a majestic female figure, in a sitting attitude; you are told it is a Roma Triumphans; you view her with all the warmth of fond enthusiasm, but you recollect that she is no longer Triumphans; you cast an indignant eye on St. Peter's church, to which she also seems to look with indignation. Is there such another instance of the vicissitude of human things; the proud Mistress of the World under the

dominion of a priest? Horace was probably accused of vanity when he wrote these lines:

——— *Usque ego postera*

Crescam laude recens, dum Capitolium

Scandet cum tacita virgine Pontifex.

Yet the poet's works have already outlived this period fourteen hundred years; and Virgil has transmitted the memory of the friendship and fame of Nisus and Euryalus, the same space of time beyond the period which he himself, in the ardour of poetic hope, had fixed for its limits.

Fortunati ambo si quid mea carmina possunt,

Nulla dies unquam memori vos eximet ævo:

Dum domus Æneæ Capitoli immobile saxum

Accolet, imperiumque Pater Romanus habebit.

In the two wings of the modern palace, called the Campidoglio, the Conservators of the city have apartments; their office is analogous to that of the ancient *Ædiles*.

In the main body an Italian nobleman, appointed by the Pope, has his residence,

with

with the title of Senator of Rome; the miserable representation of that Senate which gave laws to the world. The most defaced ruin, the most shapeless heap of antique rubbish in all Rome, cannot convey a feebler image of the building to which they belonged, than this deputy of the Pope does of that august assembly. The beautiful approach to this palace, and all the ornaments which decorate the area before it, cannot detain you long from the back view to which the ancient Capitol fronted. Here you behold the Forum Romanum, now exhibiting a melancholy but interesting view of the devastation wrought by the united force of time, avarice, and bigotry. The first objects which meet your eye, on looking from this side of the hill, are three fine pillars, two-thirds of them buried in the ruins of the old Capitol. They are said to be the remains of the temple of Jupiter Tonans, built by Augustus, in gratitude for having narrowly escaped death from a stroke of lightning. Near these are the remains

of Jupiter Stator, consisting of three very elegant small Corinthian pillars, with their entablature; the Temple of Concord, where Cicero assembled the Senate, on the discovery of Catiline's conspiracy; the Temple of Romulus and Remus, and that of Antoninus and Faustina, just by it, both converted into modern churches; the ruins of the magnificent Temple of Peace, built immediately after the taking of Jerusalem, the Roman empire being then in profound peace. This is said to have been the finest temple in old Rome; part of the materials of Nero's Golden House, which Vespasian pulled down, were used in erecting this grand edifice. The only entire pillar remaining of this temple, was placed by Paul V. before the church of Santa Maria Maggiore. It is a most beautiful fluted Corinthian column, and gives a very high idea of the temple to which it originally belonged. His Holiness has crowned it with an image of the Virgin Mary; and, in the inscription on the pedestal, he gives his

his reason for choosing a column belonging to the Temple of Peace, as an ornament to a church dedicated to the Virgin.

Ex cujus visceribus Princeps veræ Pacis genitus est.

Of many triumphal arches which stood formerly in Rome, there are only three now remaining, all of them near the Capitol, and forming entries to the Forum; those of Titus, Septimius Severus, and Constantine. The last is by much the finest of the three; but its chief beauties are not genuine, nor, properly speaking, its own; they consist of some admirable basso relievos, stolen from the Forum of Trajan, and representing that Emperor's victories over the Dacians. This theft might, perhaps, not have been so notorious to posterity, if the artists of Constantine's time had not added some figures, which make the fraud apparent, and, by their great inferiority, evince the degeneracy of the arts in the interval between the reigns of these two Emperors.

The relievos of the arch of Titus represent the table of shew-bread, the trumpets, the golden candlesticks with seven branches, and other utensils, brought from the Temple of Jerusalem. The quarter which is allotted for the Jews is not at a great distance from this arch. There are about nine thousand of that unfortunate nation at present in Rome; the lineal descendants of those brought captive, by Titus, from Jerusalem. I have been assured that they always cautiously avoid passing through this arch, though it lies directly in their way to the Campo Vaccino, choosing rather to make a circuit, and enter the Forum at another place. I was affected at hearing this instance of sensibility in a people who, whatever other faults they may have, are certainly not deficient in patriotism, and attachment to the religion and customs of their forefathers. The same delicacy of sentiment is displayed by a poet of their own country, in the 137th psalm, as it is finely translated by Buchanan :

Dum

Dum procul a Patria mœsti Babylonis in oris,
 Fluminis ad liquidas forte sedemus aquas ;
 Illa animum subiit species miseranda Sionis,
 Et numquam Patrii tecta videnda soli.

* * * * *

O Solymæ, O adyta, et sacri penetralia templi
 Ullane vos animo deleat hora meo ? &c.

You may read the whole ; you will per-
 haps find some poetical beauties which
 escaped your observation when you heard
 it sung in churches ; but the poet's ardour
 seems to glow too violently towards the end
 of the psalm.

LETTER XLI.

Rome.

THERE are many other interesting ruins in and about the Campo Vaccino, besides those I have mentioned; but of some structures which we know formerly stood here, no vestige is now to be seen. This is the case with the arch which was erected in honour of the Fabian family. There is the strongest reason to believe, that the ancient Forum was entirely surrounded with temples, basilicæ, and public buildings of various kinds, and adorned with porticoes and colonades. In the time of the Republic, assemblies of the people were held there, laws were proposed, and justice administered. In it was the Rostrum, from whence the orators harangued the people. All who aspired at dignities came hither to canvass suffrages. The Bankers had their offices near the

Forum,

Forum, as well as those who received the revenues of the Commonwealth; and all kind of business was transacted in this place. In my visits to the Campo Vaccino, I arrange the ancient Forum in the best manner I can, and fix on the particular spot where each edifice stood. In this I am sometimes a little cramped in room; for the space between the Palatine Hill and the Capitol is so small, and I am so circumscribed by arches and temples, whose ruins still remain, that I find it impossible to make the Forum Romanum larger than Covent Garden. I looked about for the Via Sacra, where Horace met with his troublesome companion. Some people imagine, this was no other than the Forum itself; but I am clearly of opinion, that the Via Sacra was a street leading to the Forum, and lost in it, as a street in London terminates at a square. I have, at last, fixed on the exact point where it joins the Forum, which is very near the Meta Sudans. If we should ever meet here, I shall convince

convince you by local arguments, that I am in the right; but I fear it would be very tedious, and not at all convincing, to transmit them to you in writing.

As Rome increased in size and number of inhabitants, one Forum was found too small, and many others were erected in process of time; but when we speak of the Forum, without any distinguishing epithet, the ancient one is understood.

The Tarpeian Rock is a continuation of that on which the Capitol was built; I went to that part from which criminals condemned to death were thrown. Mr. Byres has measured the height; it is exactly fifty-eight feet perpendicular; and he thinks the ground at the bottom, from evident marks, is twenty feet higher than it was originally; so that, before this accumulation of rubbish, the precipice must have been about eighty feet perpendicular. In reading the history of the Romans, the vast idea we form of that people, naturally extends

tends to the city of Rome, the hills on which it was built, and every thing belonging to it. We image to ourselves the Tarpeian Rock as a tremendous precipice; and, if afterwards we ever have an opportunity of actually seeing it, the height falls so short of our expectations, that we are apt to think it a great deal less than it is in reality. A mistake of this kind, joined to a careless view of the place, which is not in itself very interesting, has led Bishop Burnet into the strange assertion, that the Tarpeian Rock is so very low, that a man would think it no great matter to leap down it for his diversion. Criminals thrown from this precipice, were literally thrown out of the city of old Rome into the Campus Martius, which was a large plain, of a triangular shape; two sides of the triangle being formed by the Tiber, and the base by the Capitol, and buildings extending three miles nearly in a parallel line with it. The Campus Martius had its name from a small temple built in it, at a very early

early period, and dedicated to Mars ; or it might have this name from the military exercises performed there. In this field, the great assemblies of the people, called Censur or Lustrum, were held every fifth year ; the Consuls, Censors, and Tribunes, were elected ; the levies of troops were made ; and there the Roman youth exercised themselves in riding, driving the chariot, shooting with the bow, using the sling, darting the javelin, throwing the discus or quoit, in wrestling, running ; and when covered with sweat and dust, in consequence of these exercises, they washed their bodies clean by swimming in the Tiber. Horace accuses Lydia of ruining a young man, by keeping him from those manly exercises in which he formerly excelled.

—Cur apricum

Oderit campum, patiens pulveris atque solis :

Cur neque militaris

Inter equales equitet, Gallica nec lupatis

Temperet ora frænis ?

Cur timet flavum Tiberim tangere ?

The

The dead bodies of the most illustrious citizens were also burnt in this field, which was adorned gradually by statues and trophies, erected to the memory of distinguished men. But every feature of its ancient appearance, is now hid by the streets and buildings of modern Rome.

The inhabitants of Rome may be excused for chusing this situation for their houses, though by so doing, they have deprived us of a view of the Campus Martius. But surely they, or their Governors, ought to show more sollicitude for preserving the antiquities than they do; and they might, without inconveniency, find some place for a Cow Market, of less importance than the ancient Forum. It is not in their power to restore it to its former splendor, but they might, at least, have prevented its falling back to the state in which Æneas found it, when he came to visit the poor Evander.

Talibus inter se dictis ad tecta subibant
 Pauperis Evandri: passimque armenta videbant
 Romanoque Foro et lautis mugire carinis.

I have already said, that besides this, there were several Forums in Rome, where Basilicæ were built, justice administered, and business transacted. The Emperors were fond of having such public places named after them. The accounts we have of the Forums of Nerva, and that of Trajan, give the highest idea of their grandeur and elegance; three Corinthian pillars, with their entablature, are all that remain of the former; of the latter, the noble column placed in the middle, still preserves all its original beauty. It consists of twenty-three circular pieces of white marble, horizontally placed one above the other; it is about twelve feet diameter at the bottom, and ten at the top. The plinth of the base is a piece of marble twenty-one feet square. A staircase, consisting of one hundred and eighty-three steps, and sufficiently wide to admit a man to ascend, is cut out of the solid marble, leaving a small pillar in the middle, round which the stair winds from the bottom to the top. I observed

served a piece broken, as I went up, which shewed, that those large masses of marble have been exquisitely polished on the flat sides, where they are in contact with each other, that the adhesion and strength of the pillar might be the greater. The stairs are lighted by forty-one windows, exceedingly narrow on the outside, that they might not interrupt the connection of the basso relievos, but which gradually widen within, and by that means give sufficient light. The base of the column is ornamented with basso relievos, representing trophies of Dacian armour. The most memorable events of Trajan's expedition against the Dacians, are admirably wrought in a continued spiral line from the bottom of the column to the top. The figures towards the top, are too far removed from the eye to be seen perfectly. To have rendered them equally visible with those below, it would have been necessary to have made them larger proportionably as they ascended.

Viewed from any considerable distance, all the sculpture is lost, and a plain fluted pillar, of the same proportions, would have had as fine an effect. But such a frugal plan would not have been so glorious to the Prince, whose victories are engraven, or so interesting to the legionary foldiers, many of whom, no doubt, are here personally represented. Besides, it would not now be near so valuable a monument, in the eyes of antiquarians, or so useful a study to sculptors and painters, who have occasion to represent the military dress of the Romans, or the costume of the East in that age. Exclusive of the statue, this beautiful pillar is a hundred and twenty feet high. The ashes of Trajan were deposited in an urn at the bottom, and his statue at the top. Pope Sixtus the Fifth, in the room of the Emperor's, has placed a statue of St. Peter upon this column. I observed to a gentleman, with whom I visited this pillar, that I thought there was
not

not much propriety in placing the figure of St. Peter upon a monument, representing the victories, and erected in honour of the Emperor Trajan. "There is some propriety, however," replied he coldly, "in having made the statue of *brass*."

LETTER XLII.

Rome.

I Have been witness to the beatification of a Saint; he was of the order of St. Francis, and a great many brethren of that order were present, and in very high spirits on the occasion. There are a greater number of ecclesiastics beatified, and canonized, than any other order of men. In the first place, because, no doubt, they deserve it better; and also, because they are more solicitous to have Saints taken from among men of their own profession, and particular order, than people in other situations in life are. Every monk imagines, it reflects personal honour on himself, when one of his order is canonised. Soldiers, lawyers, and physicians, would probably be happy to see some of their brethren distinguished in the same manner; that they have not had this gratification of late years,

years, may be imputed to the difficulty of finding suitable characters among them. Ancient history, indeed, makes mention of some commanders of armies who were very great saints; but I have heard of no physician who acquired that title since the days of St. Luke; or of a single lawyer, of any age or country.

A picture of the present Expectant, a great deal larger than life, had been hung up on the front of St. Peter's church, several days before the beatification took place. This ceremony was also announced by printed papers, distributed by the happy brethren of St. Francis. On the day of the solemnity, his Holiness, a considerable number of Cardinals, many other ecclesiastics, all the Capucin Friars in Rome, and a great concourse of spectators attended. The ceremony was performed in St. Peter's church. An ecclesiastic of my acquaintance procured us a very convenient place for seeing the whole. The ceremony of beatification

is a previous step to that of canonization. The Saint, after he is beatified, is entitled to more distinction in Heaven than before; but he has not the power of freeing souls from purgatory till he has been canonized; and therefore is not addressed in prayer till he has obtained the second honour. On the present occasion, a long discourse was pronounced by a Franciscan Friar, setting forth the holy life which this Expectant had led upon earth, his devotions, his voluntary penances, and his charitable actions; and a particular enumeration was made, of certain miracles he had performed when alive, and others which had been performed after his death by his bones. The most remarkable miracle, by himself in person, was, his replenishing a lady's cupboard with bread, after her housekeeper, at the Saint's instigation, had given all the bread of the family to the poor.

This business is carried on in the manner of a law-suit. The Devil is supposed to

to have an interest in preventing men from being made Saints. That all justice may be done, and that Satan may have his due, an advocate is employed to plead against the pretensions of the Saint Expectant, and the person thus employed is denominated by the people, the Devil's Advocate. He calls in question the miracles said to have been wrought by the Saint and his bones, and raises as many objections to the proofs brought of the purity of his life and conversation as he can. It is the business of the Advocate on the other side, to obviate and refute these cavils. The controversy was carried on in Latin. It drew out to a great length, and was by no means amusing. Your friend Mr. R——y, who sat near me, losing patience, from the length of the ceremony, and some twitches of the gout, which he felt at that moment, whispered me, "I wish, from my heart, the Devil's Advocate were with his client, and this everlasting Saint fairly in Heaven, that we might get away." The

whole party, of which I made one, were seized with frequent and long-continued yawnings, which I imagine was observed by some of the Cardinals, who sat opposite to us. They caught the infection, and although they endeavoured to conceal their gaping under their purple robes, yet it seemed to spread and communicate itself gradually over the whole assembly, the Franciscan Friars excepted; they were too deeply interested in the issue of the dispute, to think it tedious. As often as the Devil's Advocate stated an objection, evident signs of impatience, contempt, surprise, indignation, and resentment, appeared in the countenances of the venerable brotherhood, according to their different characters and tempers. One shook his head, and whispered his neighbour; another raised his chin, and pushed up his under-lip with a disdainful smile; a third started, opened his eyelids as wide as he could, and held up both his hands, with his fingers extended; a fourth raised his thumb to his mouth, bit

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the nail with a grin, and jerked the thumb from his teeth towards the adversary; a fifth stared, in a most expressive manner, at the Pope, and then fixed his eyes, frowning, on the Advocate. All were in agitation, till the Saint's Counsel began to speak, when a profound silence took place, and the moment he had made his answer, their countenances brightened, a smile of satisfaction spread around, and they nodded and shook their beards at each other with mutual congratulations. In the meantime, the Cardinals, and the other auditors, who were not asleep, continued yawning; for my own part, I was kept awake only by the interlude of grimaces, played off by the Capucins between the arguments. Exclusive of these, the making a Saint of a Capucin, is the dullest business I ever was witness to. I hope the man himself enjoys much felicity since the ceremony, in which case no good-natured person will grudge the tedium and fatigue which he suffered on the occasion. I ought to have told you, that

that the Advocate's reasoning was all in vain ; the Devil lost his cause, without the possibility of appeal. The Saint's claim being confirmed, he was admitted into all the privileges of beatification ; the Convent defraying the expence of the process.

As we returned, Mr. R——y asked, if I recollected the Saint's name. I said, I did not. “ We must inform ourselves,” said he ; “ for when I meet him above, I shall certainly claim some merit with him, from having done penance at his beatification *.”

* I have been since informed, this new Saint is called St. Buonavantura ; he was by birth a Neapolitan.

LETTER XLIII.

Rome.

TRavellers are too apt to form hasty, and, for the most part, unfavourable opinions of national characters. Finding the customs and sentiments of the inhabitants of the foreign countries through which they pass, very different from their own, they are ready to consider them as erroneous, and conclude, that those who act and think in a manner so opposite to themselves, must be either knaves, fools, or both. In such hasty decisions they are often confirmed by the partial representations of a few of their own countrymen, or of other foreigners who are established in some profession in those countries, and who have an interest in giving bad impressions of the people among whom they reside.

I

That

That the Italians have an uncommon share of natural sagacity and acuteness, is pretty generally allowed ; but they are accused of being deceitful, perfidious, and revengeful ; and the frequent assassinations and murders which happen in the streets of the great towns in Italy, are brought as proofs of this charge. I have not remained a sufficient length of time in Italy, supposing I were, in all other respects, qualified to decide on the character of the inhabitants ; but from the opportunities I have had, my idea of the Italians is, that they are an ingenious sober people, with quick feelings, and therefore irritable ; but when unprovoked, of a mild and obliging disposition, and less subject to avarice, envy, or repining at the narrowness of their own circumstances, and the comparative wealth of others, than most other nations. The murders which occasionally happen, proceed from a deplorable want of police, and some very impolitic customs, which have, from various causes, crept among them, and

and would produce more frequent examples of the same kind, if they prevailed to the same degree, in some other countries. I beg you will keep in your mind, that the assassinations which disgrace Italy, whatever may have been the case formerly, are now entirely confined to the accidental squabbles which occur among the rabble. No such thing has been known for many years past among people of condition, or the middle rank of citizens; and with regard to the stabbings which happen among the vulgar, they almost always proceed from an immediate impulse of wrath, and are seldom the effect of previous malice, or a premeditated plan of revenge. I do not know whether the stories we have of mercenary bravos, men who formerly are supposed to have made it their profession to assassinate, and live by the murders they committed, are founded in truth; but I am certain, that at present there is no such trade in this country. That the horrid practice of drawing the knife and stabbing
each

each other, still subsists among the Italian vulgar, I am persuaded, is owing to the scandalous impunity with which it is treated. The asylum which churches and convents offer to criminals, operates against the peace of society, and tends to the encouragement of this shocking custom in two different manners: First, it increases the criminal's hopes of escaping; secondly, it diminishes, in vulgar minds, the idea of the atrocity of the crime. When the populace see a murderer lodged within the sacred walls of a church, protected and fed by men who are revered on account of their profession, and the supposed sanctity of their lives; must not this weaken the horror which mankind naturally have for such a crime, and which it ought to be the aim of every government to augment?

Those who are willing to admit that this last consideration may have the effect I have ascribed to it, on the minds of the vulgar,

vulgar, still contend, that the hopes of impunity can have little influence in keeping up the practice of stabbing; because, as has been already observed, these stabbings are always in consequence of accidental quarrels and sudden bursts of passion, in which men have no consideration about their future safety. All I have to say in answer is, that if the observations I have been able to make on the human character are well founded, there are certain considerations which never entirely lose their influence on the minds of men, even when they are in the height of passion. I do not mean that there are not instances of men being thrown into such paroxysms of fury, as totally deprive them of reflection, and make them act like madmen, without any regard to consequences; but extraordinary instances, which depend on peculiarities of constitution, and very singular circumstances, cannot destroy the force of an observation which, generally speaking, is found just. We every day see men, who
have

have the character of being of the most ungovernable tempers, who are apt to fly into violent fits of passion upon the most trivial occasions, yet, in the midst of all their rage, and when they seem to be entirely blinded by fury, are still capable of making distinctions ; which plainly evince, that they are not so very much blinded by anger, as they would seem to be. When people are subject to violent fits of choler, and to an unrestrained licence of words and actions, only in the company of those who, from their unfortunate situation in life, are obliged to bear such abuse, it is a plain proof that considerations which regard their own personal safety, have some influence on their minds in the midst of their fury, and instruct them to be mad *certo ratione modoque*. This is frequently unknown to those choleric people themselves, while it is fully evident to every person of observation around them. What violent fits of passion do some men indulge themselves in against their slaves and servants, which they

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always

always impute to the ungovernable nature of their own tempers, of which, however, they display the most perfect command upon much greater provocations given by their superiors, equals, or by any set of people who are not obliged to bear their ill humour. How often do we see men who are agreeable, cheerful, polite, and good-tempered to the world in general, gloomy, peevish, and passionate, to their wives and children? When you happen to be a witness to any instance of unprovoked domestic rage, into which they have allowed themselves to be transported, they will very probably lament their misfortune, in having more ungovernable tempers than the rest of mankind. But if a man does not speak and act with the same degree of violence on an equal provocation, without considering whether it comes from *superior, equal, or dependant*, he plainly shews that he can govern his temper, and that his not doing it on particular occasions,

proceeds from the basest and most despicable of all motives.

I remember, when I was on the continent with the English army, having seen an officer beat a soldier very unmercifully with his cane : I was then standing with some officers, all of whom seemed to be filled with indignation at this mean exercise of power. When the person who had performed the intrepid exploit came to join the circle, he plainly perceived marks of disapprobation in every countenance ; for which reason he thought it necessary to apologize for what he had done. “ Nothing,” says he, “ provokes me so much as a fellow’s looking saucily when I speak to him. I have told that man so fifty times ; and yet, on my reprimanding him just now, for having one of the buttons of his waistcoat broken, he *looked saucily* full in my face ; which threw me into such a passion, that I could not help threshing him.—How-

“ever, I am sorry for it, because he has
“the character of being an honest man,
“and has always done his duty, as a sol-
“dier, very well. How much,” con-
tinued he, “are those people to be envied,
“who have a full command of their
“tempers!”

“No man can command it more per-
“fectly than yourself,” said a gentleman
who was then in the foot-guards, and has
since been a general officer.

“I often endeavour to do it,” replied
the choleric man, “but always find it out
“of my power. I have not philosophy
“enough to check the violence of my
“temper when once I am provoked.”

“You certainly do yourself injustice,
“Sir,” said the officer; “no person seems
“to have their passions under better disci-
“pline. With your brother officers, I
“never saw you, in a single instance,
“break through the rules of decorum, or

“allow your anger to overcome your politeness to them.”

“They never provoked me,” said the passionate man.

“Provoked you!” rejoined the other;

“yes, Sir, often, and in a much greater

“degree than the poor soldier. Do not I,

“at this moment, give you ten thousand

“times more provocation than he, or any

“of the unfortunate men under your

“command, whom you are so apt to beat

“and abuse, ever did?—and yet you seem

“perfectly master of your temper.”

There was no way left by which the choleric man could prove the contrary, except by knocking the other down; but that was a method of convincing his antagonist which he did not think proper to use. A more intrepid man, in the same predicament, would very probably have had recourse to that expedient; but in general mankind are able, even in the violence of
passion,

passion, to estimate, in some measure, the risk they run ; and the populace of every country are more readily kindled to that *inferior* degree of rage, which makes them lose their horror for the crime of murder, and disregard the life of a fellow-creature, than to that *higher* pitch, which deprives them of all consideration for their own personal safety.

In England, Germany, or France, a man knows, that if he commits a murder, every person around him will, from that instant, become his enemy, and use every means to seize him, and bring him to justice. He knows that he will be immediately carried to prison, and put to an ignominious death, amidst the execrations of his countrymen. Impressed with these sentiments, and with the natural horror for murder which such sentiments augment, the populace of those countries hardly ever have recourse to stabbing in their accidental quarrels, however they may be inflamed with anger and rage.

The lowest blackguard in the streets of London will not draw a knife against an antagonist far superior to himself in strength. He will fight him fairly with his fists as long as he can, and bear the severest drubbing, rather than use a means of defence which is held in detestation by his countrymen, and which would bring himself to the gallows.

The murders committed in Germany, France, or England, are therefore comparatively few in number, and happen generally in consequence of a pre-concerted plan, in which the murderers have taken measures for their escape or concealment, without which they know that inevitable death awaits them. In Italy the case is different; an Italian is not under the influence of so strong an impression, that certain execution must be the consequence of his committing a murder; he is at less pains to restrain the wrath which he feels kindling within his breast; he allows his rage
full

full scope; and, if hard pressed by the superior strength of an enemy, he does not scruple to extricate himself by a thrust of his knife; he knows, that if some of the Sbirri are not present, no other person will seize him; for *that* office is held in such detestation by the Italian populace, that none of them will perform any part of its functions. The murderer is therefore pretty certain of gaining some church or convent, where he will be protected, till he can compound the matter with the relations of the deceased, or escape to some of the other Italian States; which is no very difficult matter, as the dominions of none are very extensive.

Besides, when any of these assassins has not had the good fortune to get within the portico of a church before he is seized by the Sbirri, and when he is actually carried to prison, it is not a very difficult matter for his friends or relations to prevail, by their entreaties and tears, on some of the

Cardinals or Princes, to interfere in his favour, and endeavour to obtain his pardon. If this is the case, and I am assured from authority which fully convinces me, that it is, we need be no longer surpris'd that murder is more common among the Italian populace than among the common people of any other country. As soon as asylums for such criminals are abolished, and justice is allowed to take its natural course, that foul stain will be entirely effaced from the national character of the modern Italians. This is already verified in the Grand Duke of Tuscany's dominions. The same edict which declared that churches and convents should no longer be places of refuge for murderers, has totally put a stop to the use of the stiletto; and the Florentine populace now fight with the same blunt weapons that are used by the common people of other nations.

I am afraid you will think I have been a little prolix on this occasion; but I had
two

two objects in view, and was solicitous about both. The first was to shew, that the treacherous and perfidious disposition imputed to the Italians, is, like most other national reflections, ill founded; and that the facts brought in proof of the accusation, proceed from other causes: the second was, to demonstrate to certain choleric gentlemen, who pretend to have ungovernable tempers, as an excuse for rendering every creature dependent on them miserable, that in their furious fits they not only behave ridiculously, but basely. In civil life, in England, they have the power of only making themselves contemptible; but in the army or navy, or in our islands, they often render themselves the objects of horror.

LETTER XLIV.

Rome.

THEFTS and crimes which are not capital are punished at Rome, and some other towns of Italy, by imprisonment, or by what is called the Cord. This last is performed in the street. The culprit's hands are bound behind by a cord, which runs on a pulley; he is then drawn up twenty or thirty feet from the ground, and, if lenity is intended, he is let down smoothly in the same manner he was drawn up. In this operation the whole weight of the criminal's body is sustained by his hands, and a strong man can bear the punishment inflicted in this manner without future inconveniency; for the strength of the muscles of his arms enables him to keep his hands pressed on the middle of his back, and his body hangs in a kind of horizontal position. But when they intend
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to be severe, the criminal is allowed to fall from the greatest height to which he had been raised, and the fall is abruptly checked in the middle; by which means the hands and arms are immediately pulled above the head, both shoulders are dislocated, and the body swings, powerless, in a perpendicular line. It is a cruel and injudicious punishment, and left too much in the power of those who superintend the execution, to make it severe or not, as they are inclined.

Breaking on the wheel is never used in Rome for any crime; but they sometimes put in practice another mode of execution, which is much more shocking in appearance than cruel in reality. The criminal being seated on a scaffold, the executioner, who stands behind, strikes him on the head with a hammer of a particular construction, which deprives him, at once, of all sensation. When it is certain that he is completely dead, the executioner, with a large knife, cuts his throat from ear to ear. This

last

last part of the ceremony is thought to make a stronger impression on the minds of the spectators, than the bloodless blow which deprives the criminal of life. Whether the advantages resulting from this are sufficient to compensate for shocking the public eye with such abominable sights, I very much question.

Executions are not frequent at Rome, for the reasons already given: there has been only one since our arrival; and those who are of the most forgiving disposition will acknowledge, that this criminal was not put to death till the measure of his iniquity was sufficiently full; he was condemned to be hanged for his fifth murder. I shall give you some account of his execution, and the ceremonies which accompanied it, because they throw some light on the sentiments and character of the people.

First of all, there was a procession of priests, one of whom carried a crucifix on a pole hung with black; they were followed

ed by a number of people in long gowns which covered them from head to foot, with holes immediately before the face, through which those in this disguise could see every thing perfectly, while they could not be recognized by the spectators. They are of the Company della Misericordia, which is a society of persons who, from motives of piety, think it a duty to visit criminals under sentence of death, endeavour to bring them to a proper sense of their guilt, assist them in making the best use of the short time they have to live, and who never forsake them till the moment of their execution. People of the first rank are of this society, and devoutly perform the most laborious functions of it. All of them carried lighted torches, and a few shook tin boxes, into which the multitude put money to defray the expence of masses for the soul of the criminal. This is considered by many as the most meritorious kind of charity; and some, whose circumstances do not permit them to bestow much,

confine all the expence they can afford in charity to the single article of purchasing masses to be said in behalf of those who have died without leaving a *farthing* to *save their souls*. The rich, say they, who have much superfluous wealth, may throw away part of it in acts of *temporal* charity; but it is, in a more particular manner, the duty of those who have little to give, to take care that this little shall be applied to the most beneficial purposes. What is the relieving a few poor families from the frivolous distresses of cold and hunger, in comparison of freeing them from many years burning in fire and brimstone? People are reminded of this essential kind of charity, not only by the preachers, but also by inscriptions upon the walls of particular churches and convents; and sometimes the aid of the pencil is called in to awaken the compunction of the unfeeling and hard-hearted. On the external walls of some convents, immediately above the box into which you are directed to put your money,

views

views of purgatory are painted in the most flaming colours, where people are seen in all the agonies of burning, raising their indignant eyes to those unmindful relations and acquaintances, who, rather than part with a little money, allow them to remain in those abodes of torment. One can hardly conceive how any mortal can pass such a picture without emptying his purse into the box, if, by so doing, he believed he could redeem, I will not say a human creature, but even a poor incorrigible dog, or vicious horse, from such a dreadful situation. As the Italians in general seem to have more sensibility than any people I am acquainted with, and as I see some, who cannot be supposed totally in want of money, pass by those pictures every day without putting a farthing into the box, I must impute this stinginess to a lack of faith rather than of sensibility. Such unmindful passengers are probably of the number of those who begin to suspect that the money of the living can be of little use

to

to the dead. Being absolutely certain that it gives themselves much pain to part with it in this world, and doubtful whether it will have any efficacy in abridging the pains of their friends in the other, they hesitate for some time between the two risks, that of losing their own money, and that of allowing their neighbour's soul to continue in torture; and it would appear that those sceptics generally decide the dispute in favour of the money.

But in such a case as that which I have been describing, where a poor wretch is just going to be thrust by violence out of one world, and solicits a little money to secure him a tolerable reception in another, the passions of the spectators are too much agitated for cold reasoning, and the most niggardly sceptic throws his mite into the boxes of the *Compagnia della Misericordia*. Immediately after them came the malefactor himself, seated in a cart, with a Capucin Friar on each side of him. The hangman,
with

with two assistants, dressed in scarlet jackets, walked by the cart. This procession having moved slowly round the gallows, which was erected in the Piazza del Popolo, the culprit descended from the cart, and was led to a house in the neighbourhood, attended by the two Capucins. He remained there about half an hour, was confessed, and received absolution; after which he came out, exclaiming to the populace to join in prayers for his soul, and walked with a hurried pace to the gallows; the hangman and his assistants having hold of his arms, they supported him up the ladder, the unhappy man repeating prayers as fast as he could utter till he was turned off. He was not left a moment to himself. The executioner stepped from the ladder, and stood with a foot on each of his shoulders, supporting himself in that situation with his hands on the top of the gallows, the assistants at the same time pulling down the malefactor's legs, so that he must have died in an instant. The executioner, in a

short time, slid to the ground along the dead body, as a sailor slides on a rope. They then removed the cloth which covered his face, and twirled the body round with great rapidity, as if their intention had been to divert the mob; who, however, did not shew any disposition to be amused in that manner. The multitude beheld the scene with silent awe and compassion. During the time appointed by law for the body to hang, all the members of the procession, with the whole apparatus of torches, crucifixes, and Capucins, went into a neighbouring church, at the corner of the Strada del Babbuino, and remained there till a mass was said for the soul of the deceased; and when that was concluded, they returned in procession to the gallows, with a coffin covered with black cloth. On their approach, the executioner, with his assistants, hastily retired among the crowd, and were no more allowed to come near the body. The condemned person having now paid the forfeit due to his crimes, was

no

no longer considered as an object of hatred; his dead body was therefore rescued from the contaminating touch of those who are held by the populace in the greatest abhorrence. Two persons in masks, and with black gowns, mounted the ladder and cut the rope, while others below, of the same society, received the body, and put it carefully into the coffin. An old woman then said, with an exalted voice, "Adeffo
" spero che l'anima sua sia in paradiso;"
" Now I hope his soul is in heaven;" and the multitude around seemed all inclined to hope the same.

The serious and compassionate manner in which the Roman populace beheld this execution, forms a presumption of the gentleness of their dispositions. The crimes of which this man had been guilty must naturally have raised their indignation, and his profession had a tendency to increase and keep it up; for he was one of the Sbirri, all of whom are held in the most

perfect detestation by the common people ; yet the moment they saw this object of their hatred in the character of a poor condemned man, about to suffer for his crimes, all their animosity ceased ; no rancour was displayed, nor the least insult offered, which could disturb him in his last moments. They viewed him with the eyes of pity and forgiveness, and joined, with earnestness, in prayers for his future welfare.

The manner in which this man was put to death was, no doubt, uncommonly mild, when compared with the atrocity of his guilt ; yet I am convinced, that the solemn circumstances which accompanied his execution, made a greater impression on the minds of the populace, and would as effectually deter them from the crimes for which he was condemned, as if he had been broken alive on the wheel, and the execution performed in a less solemn manner.

Convinced as I am that all horrid and refined cruelty in the execution of crimi-

nals

nals is, at best, unnecessary, I never heard of any thing of that nature without horror and indignation. Other methods, no way connected with the sufferings of the prisoner, equally deter from the crime, and, in all other respects, have a better influence on the minds of the multitude. The procession described above, I plainly perceived, made a very deep impression. I thought I saw more people affected by it than I have formerly observed among a much greater crowd, who were gathered to see a dozen or fourteen of their fellow-creatures dragged to the same death for house-breaking and highway robbery, mere venial offences, in comparison of what this Italian had perpetrated. The attendance of the Capucins, the crucifixes, the Society of Misericordia, the ceremony of confession, all have a tendency to strike the mind with awe, and keep up the belief of a future state; and when the multitude behold so many people employed, and so much pains taken, to save the soul of one

of the most worthless of mankind, they must think, that the saving of a soul is a matter of great importance, and therefore naturally infer, that the sooner they begin to take care of their own, the better. But when criminals are carried to execution with little or no solemnity, amidst the shouts of an unconcerned rabble, who applaud them in proportion to the degree of indifference and impenitence they display, and consider the whole scene as a source of amusement; how can such exhibitions make any useful impression, or terrify the thoughtless and desperate from any wicked propensity? If there is a country in which great numbers of young inconsiderate creatures are, six or eight times every year, carried to execution in this tumultuous, unaffecting manner, might not a stranger conclude, that the view of the legislature was to cut off guilty individuals in the least alarming way possible, that others might *not* be deterred from following their example?

LETTER XLV.

Rome.

THOSE who have a real pleasure in contemplating the remains of antique, and the noblest specimens of modern architecture, who are struck with the inimitable delicacy and expression of Greek sculpture, and wish to compare it with the most successful efforts of the moderns, and who have an unwearied admiration of the charms of painting, may, provided they have not more important avocations elsewhere, employ a full year with satisfaction in this city.

What is called a regular course with an Antiquarian, generally takes up about six weeks; employing three hours a-day, you may, in that time, visit all the churches, palaces, villas, and ruins, worth seeing, in or near Rome. But after having made this

course, however distinctly every thing may have been explained by the Antiquarian, if you do not visit the most interesting again and again, and reflect on them at more leisure, your labour will be of little use; for the objects are so various, and those you see on one day, so apt to be effaced by, or confounded with, those you behold on another, that you must carry away a very faint and indistinct recollection of any. Many travellers have experienced the truth of this observation.

One young English gentleman, who happens not to be violently smitten with the charms of virtù, and scorns to affect what he does not feel, thought that two or three hours a-day, for a month or six weeks together, was rather too much time to bestow on a pursuit in which he felt no pleasure, and saw very little utility. The only advantage which, in his opinion, the greater part of us reaped from our six weeks tour, was, that we *could say*, we had
 2 seen

seen a great many fine things which he had not seen. This was a superiority which he could not brook, and which he resolved we should not long enjoy. Being fully convinced, that the business might be, with a little exertion, dispatched in a very short space of time, he prevailed on a proper person to attend him; ordered a post-chaise and four horses to be ready early in the morning, and driving through churches, palaces, villas, and ruins, with all possible expedition, he fairly saw, in two days, all that we had beheld during our crawling course of six weeks. I found afterwards, by the list he kept of what he had seen, that we had not the advantage of him in a single picture, or the most mutilated remnant of a statue.

I do not propose this young gentleman's plan, as the very best possible; but of this I am certain, that he can give as satisfactory an account of the curiosities of Rome, as some people of my acquaintance who
viewed

viewed them with *equal* sensibility, and at a great deal more leisure.

Those travellers who cannot remain a considerable time at Rome, would do well to get a judicious list of the most interesting objects in architecture, sculpture, and painting, that are to be seen here; they ought to visit these frequently, and these only, by which means they will acquire a strong and distinct impression of what they see; instead of that transient and confused idea which a vast number of things, viewed superficially, and in a hurry, leave in the mind. After they have examined, with due attention, the most magnificent and best preserved remains of ancient architecture, very few have satisfaction in viewing a parcel of old bricks, which, they are told, formed the foundation of the baths of some of the Emperors. And there are not many who would regret their not having seen great numbers of statues and pictures of inferior merit, when they had beheld all that

that are universally esteemed the best. Would it not be highly judicious, therefore, in the greatest number of travellers, without abridging the usual time of the course, to make it much less comprehensive?

Besides churches, there are about thirty palaces in Rome, as full of pictures as the walls can bear. The Borgheze Palace alone is said to contain above sixteen hundred, all original. There are also ten or twelve villas in the neighbourhood of this city, which are usually visited by strangers. You may judge from this, what a task they undertake, who resolve to go through the whole; and what kind of an idea they are likely to carry away, who perform this task during a stay of a few months. Of the villas, the Pinciana, which belongs to the Borgheze family, is the most remarkable. I shall confine myself to a few cursory remarks on some of the most esteemed curiosities it contains. The Hermaphrodite

maphrodite, of which you have seen so many prints and models, is accounted by many, one of the finest pieces of sculpture in the world. The mattress, upon which this fine figure reclines, is the work of the Cavalier Bernini, and nothing can be more admirably executed. Some critics say, he has performed his task *too well*, because the admiration of the spectator is divided between the statue and the mattress. This, however, ought not to be imputed as a fault to that great artist; since he condescended to make it all, it was his business to make it as perfect as possible. I have heard of an artist at Versailles, in a different line, who attempted something of the same nature; he had exerted all his abilities in making a periwig for a celebrated preacher, who was to preach on a particular occasion before the court; and he imagined he had succeeded to a miracle. "I'll be hanged," said he to one of his companions, "if his Majesty, or any man
" of

“ of taste, will pay much attention to the
“ *sermon* to-day.”

Among the antiques, there is a Centaur in marble, with a Cupid mounted on his back. The latter has the cestus of Venus, and the ivy crown of Bacchus, in allusion to beauty and wine; he beats the Centaur with his fist, and seems to kick with violence to drive him along. The Centaur throws back his head and eyes with a look of remorse, as if he were unwilling, though forced, to proceed. The execution of this group, is admired by those who look upon it merely as a jeu d'esprit; but it acquires additional merit, when considered as allegorical of men who are hurried on by the violence of their passions, and lament their own weakness, while they find themselves unable to resist.

There is another figure which claims attention, more on account of the allegory than the sculpture. This is a small statue of Venus Cloacina, trampling on an impregnated

nated uterus, and tearing the wings of Cupid. The allegory indicates, that prostitution is equally destructive of generation and love. Keyfler mentioning this, calls it a statue of Venus, lamenting her rashness in clipping Cupid's wings.

The statue called Zingara, or the Fortune-teller, is antique, all but the head, which is Bernini's; the face has a strong expression of that fly shrewdness, which belongs to those whose trade it is to impose on the credulity of the vulgar; with a great look of some modern gypsies I have seen, who have imposed most egregiously on the self-love and credulity of the great.

Seneca dying in the Bath, in touchstone; round his middle is a girdle of yellow marble; he stands in a basin of blueish marble lined with porphyry; his knees seem to bend under him, from weakness; his features denote faintness, languor, and the approach of death; the eyes are enamelled, which gives the countenance a
fierce

fierce and disagreeable look. Colouring the eyes always has a bad effect in sculpture; they form too violent a contrast with the other features, which remain of the natural colour of the marble. When the eyes are enamelled, it is requisite that all the face should be painted, to produce the agreeable harmony of life.

The Faun dandling an infant Bacchus, is one of the gayest figures that can be imagined.

In this Villa, there are also some highly esteemed pieces by Bernini. Æneas carrying his father; David slinging the stone at Goliath; and Apollo pursuing Daphne: the last is generally reckoned Bernini's masterpiece; for my part, I have so bad a taste as to prefer the second. The figure of David is nervous, with great anatomical justness, and a strong expression of keenness and exertion to hit his mark, and kill his enemy; but the countenance of David wants dignity. An antique artist, perhaps, could

could not have given more ardour, but he would have given more nobleness to the features of David. Some may say, that as he was but a shepherd, it was proper he should have the look of a clown ; but it ought to be remembered, that David was a very extraordinary man ; and if the artist who formed the Belvedere Apollo, or if Agasias the Ephesian, had treated the same subject, I imagine they would have rendered their work more interesting, by blending the noble air of an hero with the simple appearance of a shepherd. The figures of Apollo and Daphne err in a different manner. The face and figure of Apollo are deficient in simplicity ; the noble simplicity of the best antique statues : he runs with affected graces, and his astonishment at the beginning transformation of his mistress is not, in my opinion, naturally expressed, but seems rather the exaggerated astonishment of an actor. The form and shape of Daphne are delicately executed ; but in her face, beauty is, in some degree, sacrificed to

to the expression of terror; her features are too much distorted by fear. An antique artist would have made her less afraid, that she might have been more beautiful. In expressing terror, pain, and other impressions, there is a point where the beauty of the finest countenance ends, and deformity begins. I am indebted to Mr. Lock for this observation. In some conversations I had with him at Cologne, on the subject of Sculpture, that gentleman remarked, that it was in the skilful and temperate exertion of her powers, in this noblest province of the art, *expression*, that ancient sculpture so much excelled the modern. She knew its limits, and had ascertained them with precision. As far as expression would go hand in hand with grace and beauty, in subjects intended to excite sympathy, she indulged her chisel; but where agony threatened to induce distortion, and obliterate beauty, she wisely set bounds to imitation, remembering, that though it may be moral to pity ugliness in distress,

it is more natural to pity beauty in the same situation; and that her business was not to give the strongest representation of nature, but the representation which would interest us most. That ingenious gentleman, I remember, observed at the same time, that the Greek artists have been accused of having sacrificed character too much to technical proportion. He continued to observe, that what is usually called character in a face, is probably excess in some of its parts, and particularly of those which are under the influence of the mind, the leading passion of which marks some feature for its own. A perfectly symmetrical face bears no mark of the influence of either the passions or the understanding, and reminds you of Prometheus's clay without his fire. On the other hand, the moderns, by sacrificing too liberally those technical proportions, which, when religiously observed, produce beauty, to expression, have generally lost the very point which they contended for. They seemed to think, that
when

when a passion was to be expressed, it could not be expressed too strongly; and that sympathy always followed in an exact proportion with the strength of the passion, and the force of its expression. But passions, in their extreme, instead of producing sympathy, generally excite feelings diametrically opposite. A vehement and clamorous demand of pity is received with neglect, and sometimes with disgust; whilst a patient and silent acquiescence under the pressure of mental affliction, or severe bodily pain, finds every heart upon an unison with its sufferings. The ancients knew to what extent expression may be carried, with good effect. The author of the famous Laocoon, in the Vatican, knew where to stop, and if the figure had been alone, it would have been perfect; there is exquisite anguish in the countenance, but it is borne in silence, and without distortion of features. Puget thought he could go beyond the author of Laocoon; he gave voice to his Milo; he made him roaring with pain,

and lost the sympathy of the spectator. In confirmation of this doctrine, Mr. Locke desired, that when I should arrive at Rome, I would examine, with attention, the celebrated statue of Niobe, in the Villa de Medici. I have done so again and again, and find his remarks most strikingly just. The author of the Niobe has had the judgment not to exhibit all the distress which he might have placed in her countenance. This consummate artist was afraid of disturbing her features too much, knowing full well, that the point where he was to expect the most sympathy was there, where distress co-operated with beauty, and where *our pity met our love*. Had he sought it one step farther, in *expression*, he had lost it. It is unjust, you will say, that men should not sympathise with homely women in distress, in the same degree as they do with the beautiful. That is very true; but it is the business of the sculptor to apply his art to men as he finds them, not as they ought to be. Beside, this principle
has

has full force, and is strictly true, only in sculpture and painting. For, in real life, a woman may engage a man's esteem and affections by a thousand fine qualities, and a thousand endearing ties, though she is entirely deficient in beauty.

This Villa is also enriched by one of the most animated statues in the world, and which, in the opinion of many men of taste, comes nearest, and in the judgment of some, equals the Apollo of the Vatican. I mean the statue of the fighting Gladiator. It is difficult, however, to compare two pieces whose merits are so different. The Apollo is full of grace, majesty, and conscious superiority; he has shot his arrow, and knows its success. There is, indeed, a strong expression of indignation, which opens his lips, distends his nostrils, and contracts his brows; but it is the indignation of a superior being, who punishes while he scorns the efforts of his enemy. The Gladiator, on the contrary, full of fire

and youthful courage, opposes an enemy that he does not fear ; but whom, it is evident, he thinks worthy of his utmost exertion ; every limb, nerve, and sinew, is in action ; his ardent features indicate the strongest desire, the highest expectation, but not a perfect security of victory. His shape is elegant as well as nervous, expressive of agility as well as strength, and equally distant from the brawny strength of the Farnesian Hercules, and the effeminate softness of the Belvedere Antinous. The action is transitive (if the term may be so used), and preparatory only to another disposition of body and limbs, which are to enable him to strike, and which he cannot do in his present position ; for the moment his right arm crossed the perpendicular line of his right leg, the whole figure would be out of its centre. His action seems a combination of the defensive and offensive ; defensive in the *present* moment, the left arm being advanced to secure the adversary's

7

blow ;

blow; and preparing for offence in the next, the left leg already taking its spring to advance in order to give the figure a centre, which may enable it to strike, without risk of falling, if the blow should not take place. The action of the right arm, however, will always remain in some degree problematical, the ancient being lost; by whom the modern arm is restored, I never heard.

Though this fine figure generally goes by the name of the fighting Gladiator, some antiquarians cannot allow, that ever it was intended to represent a person of that profession, but a Victor at the Olympic games; and allege, that Agasias of Ephesus, the sculptor's name, being inscribed upon the pedestal, supports their opinion, because the Greeks never used gladiators. But I fear this argument has little weight; for the Greek slaves at Rome put their name to their work; and the free Greek artists, working in Greece, in public works,

found difficulty in obtaining the same indulgence. Those who wish to rescue this statue from the ignoble condition of a common Gladiator, say further, that he looks up as if his adversary were on horseback, adding, that gladiators never fought on foot against horsemen on the Arena. Here again, I am afraid, they are mistaken. He looks no higher than the eye of an enemy on foot; the head must have a much greater degree of elevation to look up to the eye of an horseman, which is the part of your adversary which you always fix.

Some learned gentlemen, not satisfied that this statue should be thrown indiscriminately among Gladiators and Victors of the Olympic games, have given it a particular and lasting character; they roundly assert, that it is the identical statue, made by order of the Athenian State, in honour of their countryman Chabrias; and that it is precisely in the attitude which, according to Cornelius Nepos, that hero assumed, when

when he repulsed the army of Agefilaus. This idea is in the true spirit of an antiquary.

If, upon turning to that author, you remain unconvinced, and are interested in the honour of the statue, I can furnish you with no presumptive proof of its original dignity, except, that the character of the face is noble and haughty, unlike that of a slave and mercenary Gladiator. And there is no rope around the neck, as the Gladiator *Moriens* has, whom that circumstance sufficiently indicates to have been in that unfortunate situation.

LETTER XLVI.

Rome.

A Few days since I went to call on an artist of my acquaintance. I met, coming out of his door, an old woman, and a very handsome girl, remarkably well shaped. I rallied him a little on the subject of his visitors, and his good fortune in being attended in a morning by the prettiest girl I had seen since I came to Rome. "I think myself fortunate," said he, "in having found a girl so perfectly well made, who allows me to study her charms without restraint, and at a reasonable price; but I assure you, I can boast of no other kind of good fortune with her." "I am convinced," rejoined I, "that you take great pleasure in your studies, and there can be no doubt that you have made a very desirable progress." "Of that you shall be the judge," replied he, leading me into another

another room, where I saw a full length painting of the girl, in the character of Venus, and in the *usual dress* of that goddess. “There,” said he, “is the only effect my studies have had hitherto, and I begin to suspect that they will never produce any thing more nearly connected with the original.” He then informed me, that the old woman I had seen was the girl’s mother, who never failed to accompany her daughter, when she came as a model to him; that the father was a tradesman, with a numerous family, who thought this the most innocent use that his daughter’s beauty could be put to, till she should get a husband; and to prevent its being put to any other, his wife always accompanied her. “I have drawn her as Venus,” added he; “but, for any thing I know to the contrary, I should have approached nearer to her real character if I had painted her as Diana. She comes here merely in obedience to her parents, and gains her bread as innocently as if

“ she

“ she were knitting purses in a convent
 “ from morning to night, without seeing
 “ the face of a man.”

“ However innocent all this may be,”
 said I, “ there is something at which the
 “ mind revolts, in a mother’s being present
 “ when her daughter acts a part which, if
 “ not criminal, is, at least, highly in-
 “ delicate.”

“ To be sure,” replied the painter, “ the
 “ woman has not quite so much delicacy as
 “ to starve, rather than let her daughter
 “ stand as a model; yet she seems to have
 “ attention to the girl’s chastity, too.”

“ Chastity !” answered I, “ why this
 “ would shock an *English* woman more
 “ than any thing which could be proposed
 “ to her. Every other kind of liberty must
 “ have been previously taken with her. She
 “ must be a complete prostitute in every
 “ sense of the word, before she could be
 “ brought to submit to appear in this
 “ manner.”

“ Your

“Your observation is true,” replied he ;
“but it does not prove that those who sub-
“mit to this, to prevent their becoming
“prostitutes, do not judge better than those
“who become prostitutes, and then submit
“to this. In different countries,” conti-
nued he, “people think very differently on
“subjects of this kind. The parents of
“this girl, to my knowledge, have refused
“considerable offers from men of fortune,
“to be allowed the privilege of *visiting* her.
“They are so very careful of preventing
“every thing of that nature, that she actu-
“ally lies in the same bed with them
“both, which is another piece of indelicacy
“not uncommon among the lower people
“in Italy. These parents have the more
“merit in refusing such offers, as their act-
“ing otherwise would by no means be
“thought extraordinary; nor would it raise
“the same degree of indignation here as in
“some other countries of Europe. Breach
“of chastity, in females of low rank, is not
“considered here in the same heinous light

“ that it is in some parts of Germany and
 “ Great Britain; where it is deemed a crime
 “ of such magnitude, as to require expia-
 “ tion, by a public rebuke from the parson
 “ in the middle of the church. I have
 “ heard of a clergyman in the North, who
 “ had occasion to rebuke a young woman
 “ for having borne a child before marriage.
 “ The accomplice in her guilt had married
 “ her immediately after her recovery; but
 “ this did not abate the parson’s indigna-
 “ tion against the wickedness they had pre-
 “ viously committed. Magdalen,” said
 he, with an awful tone of voice, to the wo-
 man, “ you stand before this congregation
 “ to be rebuked for the *barbarous* and un-
 “ *natural* crime of fornication.”

“ The reverend clergyman, said I, in all
 “ probability intended to terrify his pa-
 “ rishioners from such irregularities; and
 “ for this purpose imagined there would be
 “ no harm in putting them in the most
 “ odious point of view.” “ This is attend-
 “ ed,

“ed, however, by one dreadful confe-
 “quence,” replied the artist, “that these
 “unhappy creatures, to conceal a fault of
 “which such a horrible idea is given, and
 “to prevent the shame of a public expo-
 “sition in the church, are sometimes tempt-
 “ed to commit a crime which is in reality
 “barbarous, and unnatural in the highest
 “degree.”

“There is nothing,” continued he,
 “which has a greater tendency to ren-
 “der any set of people worthless, than the
 “idea that they are already considered as
 “such. The women all over Great Bri-
 “tain, who live in an open and avowed
 “breach of chastity, are generally more
 “daringly wicked, and devoid of principle,
 “than the Italian women who take the
 “same liberties.”

“Would you then,” said I, “have wo-
 “men of that kind more respected in
 “Great Britain, in hopes that it might,
 “in time, make them more respectable?”

“I express

“ I express no desire on the subject,”
 replied he. “ I was only going to remark,
 “ that, in avoiding one inconveniency,
 “ mankind often fall into another ; and that
 “ we are too apt to censure and ridicule cus-
 “ toms and opinions different from those
 “ which prevail in our own country, with-
 “ out having sufficiently considered all their
 “ immediate and remote effects. I did not
 “ intend to decide, whether the indulgence
 “ with which women of a certain class are
 “ viewed in Italy, or the ignominy with
 “ which they are treated in Great Britain,
 “ has, upon the whole, the best effect in
 “ society. But I have observed, that the
 “ public courtezans in England often be-
 “ come quite abandoned, and forget all sense
 “ of gratitude or affection, even to their pa-
 “ rents. But in Italy, women who never
 “ put any value on the virtue of chastity,
 “ those who sell their favours for money,
 “ display a goodness of character in other
 “ respects, and continue their duty and at-
 “ tachment to their parents as long as they
 “ live.

“live. Foreigners who form a connection
“with a girl in this country, find them-
“selves very often obliged to maintain the
“father, mother, and whole family to
“which she belongs. The lover generally
“considers this as a very troublesome cir-
“cumstance, and endeavours to inspire his
“Italian mistress with that total neglect of
“her family which prevails among women
“of her stamp in other countries; but he
“very seldom succeeds. An Italian woman
“is unwilling to quit her native city and
“her family, even for a man she loves;
“and seldom does, till he makes some pro-
“vision for her nearest relations.”

“You seem to have a very great affec-
“tion for the Italian ladies; and, as far as
“I can perceive,” said I, “your passion is
“universal to the whole class in question;
“but you have said nothing to the essential
“article of religion. It is to be hoped,
“they do not allow the duties of their pro-
“fession to make them neglect their souls.”

“I see,” replied the painter, “you are
 “disposed to laugh at all I have said in
 “their favour; but in answer to your
 “question, I will fairly own, that their re-
 “ligious, or, if you please, we shall rather
 “call them their superstitious, sentiments,
 “seem to be no way influenced by their
 “profession; nor are the duties of their
 “profession in any degree affected by these
 “sentiments. They attend mass, and the
 “ceremonies of devotion, with as much
 “punctuality as if their lives were regular
 “in all other respects; and they pass their
 “lives, in other respects, as if they had
 “never heard of any religious system but
 “that of Epicurus. In some countries of
 “Europe, women of their stamp often de-
 “spise every appearance of decency, assume
 “the disgusting depravity of male debau-
 “chees, with all the airs of affected in-
 “fidelity, and real profligacy; but *here*
 “they always remember they are women;
 “and, after they have lost the most valued
 “and brightest ornament of their sex,
 “still

“ still endeavour to retain some of the
 “ others.”

“ After all you have said in their fa-
 “ vour,” said I, “ their condition is cer-
 “ tainly not to be envied. If, therefore,
 “ you have any regard for your *young*
 “ *Venus*, you will do well to leave her under
 “ the care of her mother, and never en-
 “ deavour to introduce her into the com-
 “ munity whose eulogium you have been
 “ making.”

When I returned from the house of this
 artist, I found Mr. ——— waiting for me at
 our lodgings. He has of late paid his court
 very assiduously to a lady of high rank in
 this place : she is distinguished, even here,
 for a punctilious observance of all the cere-
 monies appointed by the church, and could
 not eat meat on a meagre-day, or deviate
 from the canonical regulations in any point
 of equal importance, without remorse ; but
 in matters of gallantry, she has the repu-
 tation of being infinitely more liberal, both

in her sentiments and practice. She has been for some time provided with a very able and respectable lover, of her own country. This did not make her blind to the good qualities of Mr. —, with whom she formed a very intimate connection, soon after his arrival here; not that she prefers him to her other lover, but merely from a strong sense of the truth and beauty of his arithmetical axiom—one and one make two. The new arrangement with our countryman, however pleasing to the lady, gave offence to her Father Confessor. The scrupulous ecclesiastic was of opinion, that a connection of this nature with a heretic was more criminal than with a man of her own communion. Mr. — was just come from the lady to our lodgings; he had found her in worse humour than he had ever observed before, though her temper is not the mildest in the world. Mr. — entered as the Confessor went out; she shut the door after him with a violence which shook the whole house, muttering, as she returned

returned to her seat, *Che ti possino Cascar le braccia Vecchio Dondolone.* Mr. ——— expressed his concern on seeing her so much agitated. “No wonder,” said she, “that “stubborn Animalaccio who is just gone “out, has had the insolence to refuse “me absolution. As I expected you this “morning, I sent for him betimes, that “the matter might have been expedited “before you should come; but here I have “been above an hour endeavouring to per- “suade him, but all to no purpose; nothing “I could say was able to mollify the ob- “stinate old greasy rascal.” Mr. ——— joined in abusing the Confessor’s perverseness, hinting, at the same time, that she ought to despise it as a matter of little importance; that she was sure of receiving absolution sooner or later; and, whenever it happened, all the transactions of the interval would be comprehended within that act of grace. Upon the strength of this reasoning, Mr. ——— was proceeding to fulfil the purpose of his visit with as much

alacrity as if the most complete discharge had been granted for all proceedings—
“*Pian Piano Idol mio,*” cried the lady,
“*bisogna rimettersi alla volontà di Dio.*”
She then told her lover, that although she despised the Confessor as much as he could do, yet she must take care of her own soul; that not having settled her accounts with heaven for a considerable time, she was determined not to begin a new score till the old should be cleared; adding, for her principal reason, *Patto chiaro, amico caro.*

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.

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H.

Home

Moore, John

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